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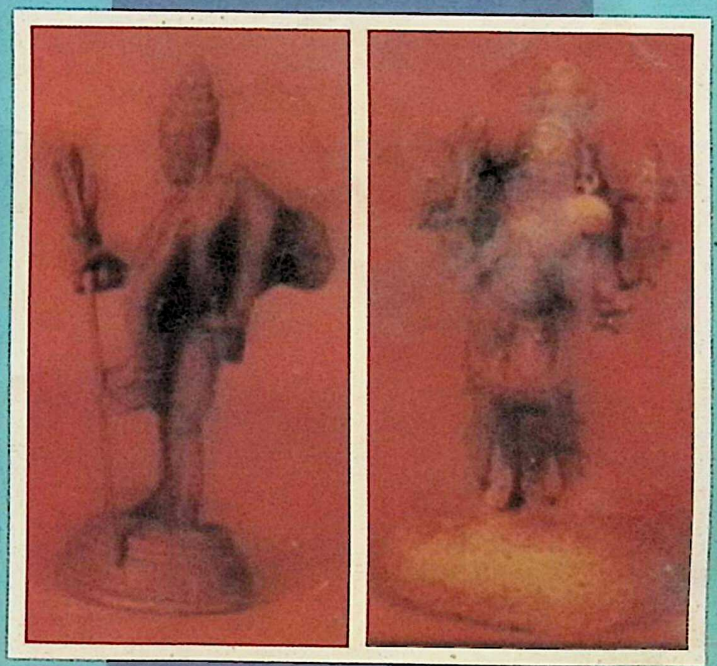
Proceedings of INDIAN ART HISTORY CONGRESS

Editors
C.P.Sinha
U.C.Dwivedi



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DHARMASTHALA : NOVEMBER 1999

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INDIAN ART HISTORY CONGRESS, GUWAHATI (ASSAM)
and SUNDEEP PRAKASHAN, NEW DELHI

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Editors

C.P. SINHA
U.C. DWIVEDI
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Ph. 5718903, 5734149
Fax : 91-11-5783694
E-mail : sundeep@giasdl01.vsnl.net.in

Cover Photo

Fig. 1. Śiva Bhikshatana Murti, Bronze, Manjusha Museum, Dharmasthala.

Fig. 2. Śiva carrying Sati, Bronze, two handed Śiva, Manjusha Museum, Dharmasthala.

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PREFACE

It gives us great pleasure in presenting to the world of scholars the proceeding of the 8th Session of the Indian Art History Congress held at Dharmasthala (Karnataka) from 17th to 19th November, 1999. The general theme of the Conference was "Śaivism in Art and Culture".

The Congress was inaugurated by Padma Bhushana. Veerendra Heggade, Dharmadhikari of Dharmasthala in absence of Sri Anantha Kumar, Hon'ble Minister of Culture, Government of India who could not reach there due to unavoidable circumstances. Dharmadhikari requested art historians to come forward in preserving the art objects lying in different corners of the country and our cultural heritage. Dr. S.P. Gupta, the General President of the session presented the presidential address on this occassion. In his address, he traced the history of Indian art in different period. Dr. M.L. Nigam, Chairman, IAHC, presided over the function. Dr. R.D. Chaudhury, General Secretary of IAHC traced the brief history of IAHC & Prof. S. Prabhara secretary S.D.M. Education Society welcomed the participents at the beginning and Dr. Choodamani Nandgopal, Joint Secretary, IAHC proposed the vote of thanks.

Dr. Haripriya Rangarajan, the Lady Governor of Andhra Pradesh and a well known art-historian was kind enough to deliver the Prof. K.D. Bajpai Memorial Lecture during the Congress.

The volume contains altogether 17 papers, though few more spoken extempore were also presented during the session. Unfortunately, even later, we could have their written version and as such they could not be incorporated in this volume. Some of the papers could not be included as they lacked proper references in them. In spite of these drawbacks, we note with satisfaction that the studies presented in this collection are very much important for the study of Śaiva art in India.

We have tried our best to make this volume upto mark but we crave the indulgence of readers for errors of ommision and commission.

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We are very grateful to the members for attending and presenting their papers in the Congress. In fact, it is the members who make such type of Congress successful.

We also take this opportunity to thank the Presidents of various session, who took the responsibility of running the session smoothly. We also thank Dr. Choodamani Nandgopal for her help in organising this session.

We are thankful to our host Sri D. Veerendra Heggade and and International Centre for Indian Art and Cultural Studies, Banglore for their nice hospitality.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to Dr. M.L. Nigam, Chairman and Dr. R.D. Chaudhury, General Secretary of Indian Art History Congress for their keen interest in the publication of this volume.

Last but not the least, we are thankful to Mr. Sundeep Singhal of Sundeep Prakashan, New Delhi for hard work in getting this volume printed within the scheduled date.

Patna, Vijayadashami — **C.P. Sinha**

7th October, 2000 **U.C. Dwivedi**

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Padma Bhushana Dr. Veerendra Heggade,
Dharmadhikari, Dharmasthala

Dr. S.P. Gupta, General President of the session, Dr. R.D. Choudhury, Director General, National Museum, Delhi and also the General Secretary of the IAHC, Dr. Mrs. Haripriya Rangarajan, Lady Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. M.L.Nigam, former Director, Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad and Chairman of IAHC, Dr. S.R.Rao, ex-President of IAHC Session and Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal, Joint Secretary, IAHC, delegates, who have gathered here from all over the country, ladies and gentlemen, I am doubly fortunate today because I was supposed to host this conference at Dharmasthala and to welcome the audience and the delegates who have gathered here. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Culture, Mr. Ananth Kumar was supposed to come and inaugurate the session. Unforunately due to very pressing engagements in Delhi which he could not avoid, he has telephoned and excused himself for his inability to travel to Dharmasthala and to inaugurate the session. I am sure, we have the highest press representatives here today and all the gentlemen of the press will be highly disappointed by the absence of the Minister because I can inaugurate and only pose you certain problems and only pose you as many problems as I have seen in this country. But the Hon'ble Minister perhaps would have given you more solutions, more promises, more vision than me. So, definitely, you miss a colourful speech and promise that should have given us more courage for the future. But always the divine hand has its own play and I am sure, we will, the Indian Art History Congress will receive all the help, all the cooperation and all the support off he Government of India to carry on its work in the future days to come.

I am happy that this conference has been organised here, as we are also involved in few activities connected with history and protection of monuments and activities of preservation. In the last 50 years, the Indian government and we were

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only concerned with poverty eradiction, we were more concerned about our domestic problems, political settlements. We had our own problems to tackle. For the last fifty years, very minimum efforts have been done to throw light on the historical places of the country, monuments, the art, the literature, the painting which have to be protected. In fact, the British government had greatly contributed in preservation of this art and architecture of our country. I have many books in my collection, in the museum here, which throw light on the outlook of British in praising and in preserving, in collecting information about the precious places which had to be protected. In fact the British discovered the places like Ajanta and Ellora. The very interesting monuments like Konark or some other places were really preserved or were identified by these innovative Britishers, either by the officials or historians or other people. We had scholars but we had no researchers in those days perhaps. The outlook for research and the outlook for study, outlook for preservation was not evident in India. It is not surprising and we should always salute those men who have given us a new outlook to look into the past and to know the glory of it and to study, preserve and protect these monuments.

I have gone round the country and I have seen many monuments of very precious stature in a very bad, neglected and pathetic condition. I don't want to take too much time in front of the scholars here. But I would only like to say, I am only sick to see, its only painful to see very important places in our own Karnataka, for example, Hampi is encroached all round the town and private gardens and private properties are growing round the historical places. I had written a letter to the Chief Minister of Karnataka and as usual, I never got a reply about it. I went to Pattadakal and other places where I found the monuments were very neglected. Within the very sanctum of the temple, which had to be protected, I found the religious activities going on, rituals going on, marriages going on. And the whole area was so polluted and I was ashamed to find that the Karnataka Tourism Department was projecting these monuments to invite guests from through out the world. But when they perhaps visit these centres, I could imagine the impression they would carry with them and with shame I bowed my head and I thought it is better, if we don't invite any foreigners, any guests from abroad to visit these centres.

Awareness has to be created, instead of posing the problems too much. Awareness has to be created to know the value of these monuments, to know the value of these places. The art, the paintings in many of the temples, religious mutts are slowly transferred into modern buildings, forgetting the value of those ancient monuments and the paintings and the value of the architecture they have there. In fact, when I went to some of the north Indian temples, I found that the Archaeology

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Department which was supposed to protect these monuments had very meager staff to protect it. And the funds provided to the department by the Government of India or the concerned ministry was so meager that they were not able to hold it for too long.

Unless there is a very desperate and very active and immediate action to protect our culture, to protect our ancient monuments, places of interest, places of art treasured, it will very fast deteriorate and it is time that we think of our past. Because, we in India have very little, say about, the achievements we have done in the past few years. We always say that our country is so ancient, we have a great history, great men, great stalwarts, and great literature. But when a visitor comes to this country or visits the country, he is very much distrubed to see the situations in these places. So, it is our duty to protect these places and to see that the local people are also involved and educated in the preservation activity and in protecting these monuments. I feel the students have to be educated much faster, immediately than what it is now. History in a high school or primary school or a college means only study of the incidents that took place over the years. It is not a awareness creating programme to know the value of the art, the value of architecture, the value of the glorious past, or the priceless monuments and sculptures that have to be protected. So, we find the studnets who visit these sites disturb and destroy the serenity and the value of the monuments than try to involve themselves in observing it and enjoying it.

In fact, these unattended monuments, because there are two categories, some of them are protected by the government and there are, equally or more at least fifty percent more than the protected monuments, unprotected monuments which are necessarily to be protected immediately. The one effort that we try to do through Dharmothana trust is that, we many temples, many monuments searched out many sculptures, and many interesting spots, which need protection. The government has declarted some monuments as national monuments, much earlier, years back and since then they have been forgotten. Those who have not been protected are forgotten. But they have more valuable sculptures; more valuable art pieces than many of the protected monuments. So, we took up a project and thought that we should revive these thing because it is a living temple, the devotees try to renovate it using all modern cement and concrete structures. So these cement structures will destroy the serenity and the original value of the sculptures there. So, we tried to take the help of Dr. S.R. Rao, an eminent archaeologist and art historian of the country, as our chief consultant. We have also appointed two retired Archaeological Survey of India's staff so that they may renovate these temples, preserve these temples, in the style adopted through out the world. International

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standard of these conservation work is maintained as per the scientific method and I am happy that we could contribute something by renovating about eighteen temples by now and about ten temples are under progress.

The thefts of these monuments was one reason why we started collecting items to our museum. It was not out of greed or a taste for precious items. If it were to be for a personal taste, you would find many pieces in my room or my house. But you will not find even a single piece inside my house. This was all collected and preserved in the museum with a clear cut intention that it is a collection and preservation work because if you visit a village and if you find a sculpture there as you find in these places they would like to keep it there. They would say, no we don't want to part with it because it is a holy idol and that has to be in our village. But over night if somebody removes it from there, next day it goes to Goa or some other point. It vanishes from the country. They just keep quite and they don't bother about it. We see everyday in the press that precious idols are stolen from the temples, precious sculptures are stolen, and hardly two to three percent of the stolen items are recovered. This is because there is no special police force or protection force in the country to preserve these monuments.

I think I should draw the attention of the concerned authorities of the Indian Art History Congress that it should make special effort with the Government of Indian to see that a special department is opened up to record the temples which are not covered and protected under the Archaeological Survey of India, at least to identify them. You have some state monuments which may be identified and documented and then the local authorities may be given a right to protect them. At the same time if there are any thefts, the local policemen or the police station may not be in a position to do any follow up action because overnight it may travel another six hundred km. It may not be possible for these people to cover even sixty km with the fuel permission they have. So the government itself has to make a special department to see that any stolen item is recovered immediately because they will know the end point where it will rech and where it will vanish. So I request to protect these sculptures from vanishing from these points and again going out of the country. I have found many, as you have seen many of our sculptures are abroad in beautiful museums.

Finally, I think God has to bless us to protect these monuments because, the Gods themselves are in great danger and uncared position. Any temple built by a common man will be forever because, their faith and their shoulders construct

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it. If an emperor or a king does, it will definitely find the day. That is why all the temples built by the emperors, the great kings need more support by the gods and by the government. So, I pray the deities inside these temples to protect themself for the posterity. The great temples, built by the great kings now must be taken over by the government for protection and they should be given more care. I was happy to explain to Smt. Rangarajan that we could collect a chariot, a temple car from Srirangapattana because, it was opposite the police station for about thirty to forty years. So, just because it was in front of the police station we could collect it intact. Otherwise within two years it would have gone either to the neighbouring kitchen hall or to some other market in Mysore. I think the Indian Art History Congress has committed itself to propagate and to organise such conferences. More than that, I think, we need the youths, the young historians to come forward and follow the footsteps of the great historians and the great personalities that we find on the dais in front of me.

Because, now historian means not a Professor of history. Today in every subject in any university there are only teachers more than researchers or observers. The scholars who would study on a particular subject everywhere need some scholarship, they need some protection, some support and they would like to publish the papers with minimum effort than maximum effort.

So, I would request the Indian Art history Congress to support these youths with additional support from your office or different universities creating more funds for this activity, from the Government of India to see that scholarship is given or the support is given to the scholars. The students of history, the people who are interested in the study of history, art and architecture and all other monuments whatever it is, to come up, to become good researcher and to take active participation in protection of these monuments. So, with these few words I also request the Professors and great scholars who are here to support my museum programme here. Dr. Nigam who was here yesterday, gave me few clues because we had very little time to share with him about the display, the preservation and so many other activities. So the one benefit that I would like to take from the gathering here is to take more suggestions from you, guidance from you and support from you to develop the museum, we have started here into a real scholarly museum and it should not only convey and exhibition for the visitors of Dharmasthala but, it should also be for scholars to study, to do research and to form their own study.

I am sure, you are enjoying your stay in Dharmasthala and I would request you to have very useful and purposeful discussions in the days to come and as I

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told you and especially the press men here, they will be thoroughly disappointed with the absence of minister. But I am sure, they will carry the spirit of the conference here and they would be contributing in turn to protect the monuments, art, architecture, and the culture of the country because culture, art and the past is very closely linked and we pray Lord Manjunasthasvamy to bless for the success of the deliberations to come after this.

Thank you.

Veerendra Heggade

Dharmasthala

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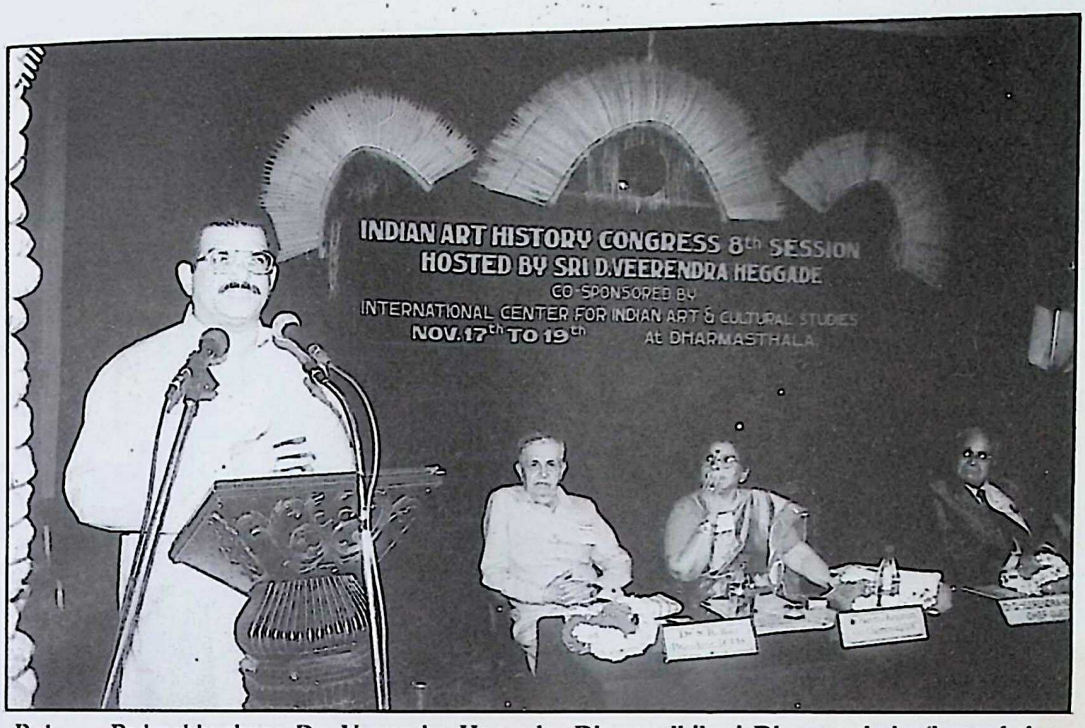
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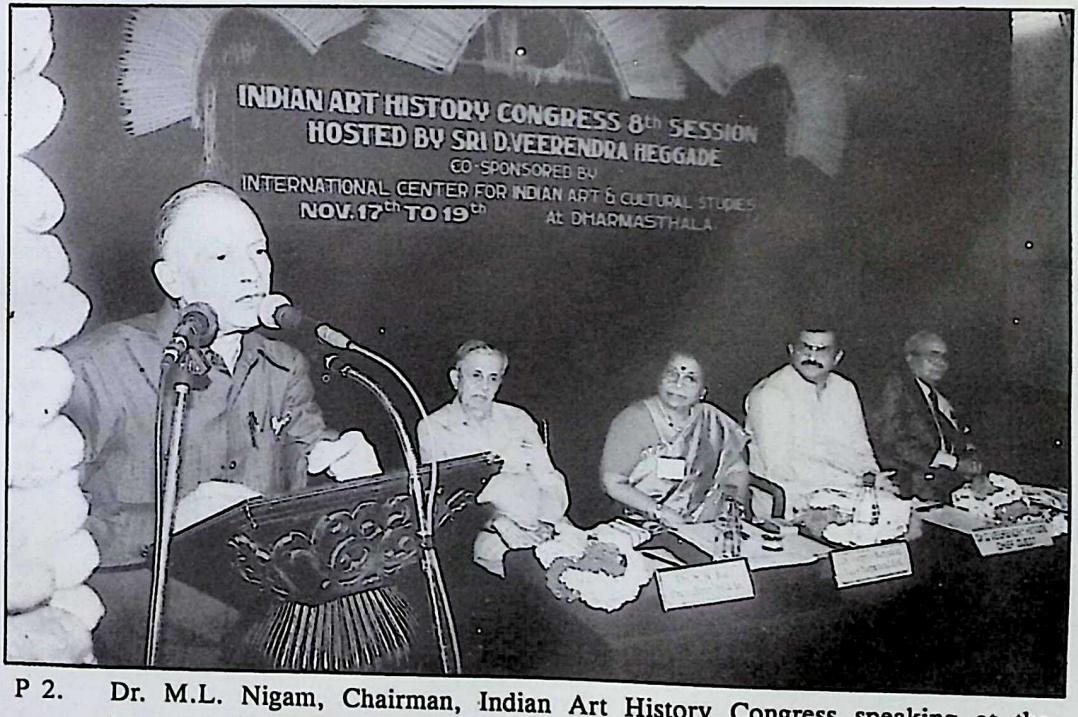
P 1. Padmabhushana Dr. Veerendra Heggade, Dharmadhikari Dharmasthala (hosted the 8th session) delivering inaugural address.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P 2. Dr. M.L. Nigam, Chairman, Indian Art History Congress speaking at the inaugural function.

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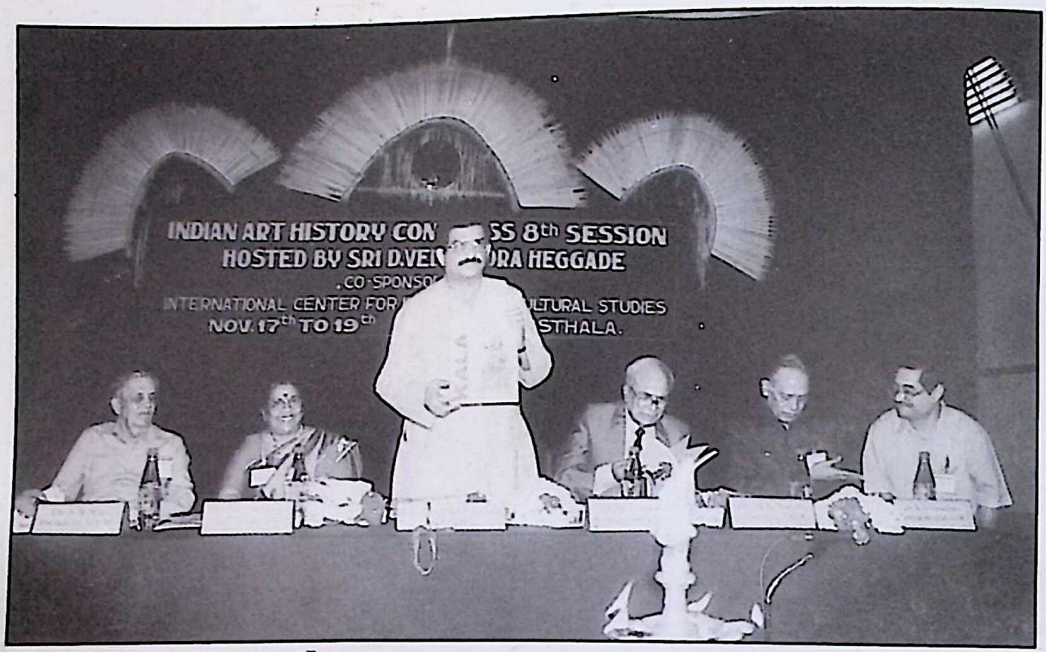
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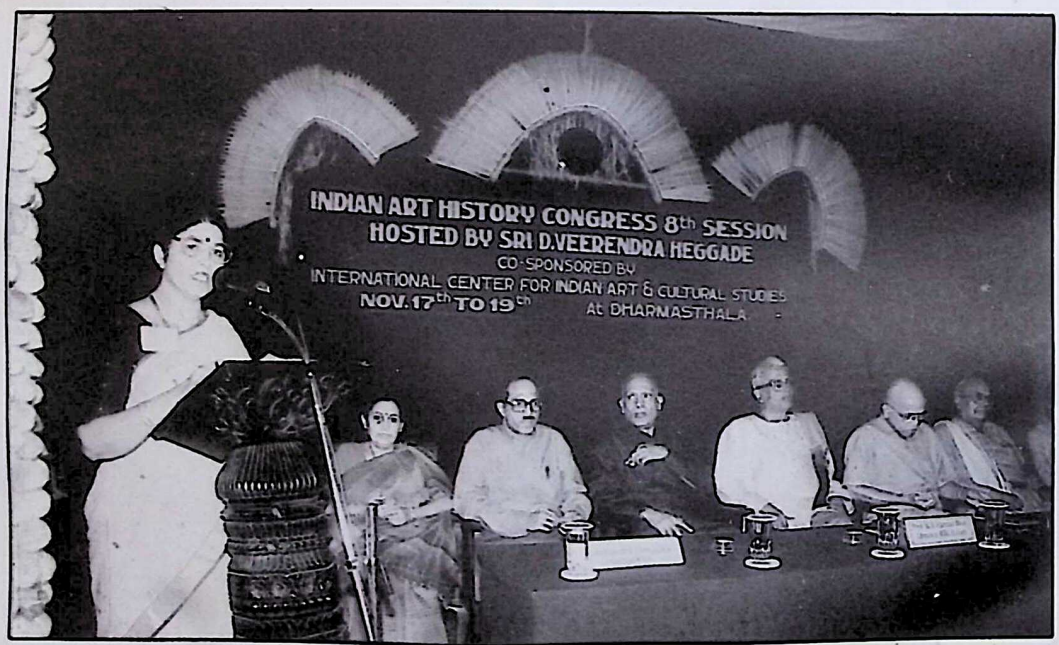
P 3. Releasing of KALĀ, Journal of Indian Art History Congress by Dharmadhikari Dr. Veerendra Heggade, Dr. S.R. Rao, Dr. Haripriya Rangarajan, Dr. S.P. Gupta, Dr. M.L. Nigam and Dr. R.D. Choudhury at the inaugural function.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P 4. "Veledictory function" Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal welcoming Dr. Veerendra Heggade, Mr. Prabhakar, Dr. M.L. Nigam, Dr. K.S. Haridas Bhat, Dr. Hegde and Dr. S.P. Gupta particepating in the function.

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GENERAL PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

*S.P. Gupta**

INDIAN ART HISTORY : PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Art belongs to people. It is people specific. It is exclusively their product. It is a product of their culture. It is, therefore, unique to them. Any evaluation of an Art, therefore, demands, as a prerequisite, the total understanding of the culture whose product it has been. In other words, art is not totally autonomous, an island completely cut off from the mainland. It is a part-and-parcel of a culture. In fact, the study of a 'culture' is inconceivable unless it's art is also studies. Art is culture and culture is art.

Greek Art is different from Chinese Art and Chinese Art is different from Egyptian Art, Egyptian Art is different from Indian Art and Indian Art is also different from Phoenician Art because each one of these has been a product of a culture-specific which was formed by the people who conceived, formed, developed and lived it.

The inseperableness of 'art' and 'culture', therefore, makes it absolutely clear that Greek art should be evaluated in terms of Greek culture, Chinese art should be evaluated in terms of Chinese culture and Indian art should be evaluated in terms of Indian culture. In other words, in order to measure Indian art Greek yardstick cannot be used and Indian yardstick can not be used to measure Greek art. What is significant to know is how the Indians looked at the Indian art or the Greeks looked at their own art and not that how the Europeans looked at the Indian art or Greek art.

---

* Chairman, Indian Archaeological Society and Indian History and cultural Society, New Delhi.

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But this was hardly realised in the past. Greek yardstick and European yardstick were freely used to measure Indian Art. There was no reference to the Indian Culture of which the Indian art was a product. Obviously, there could not be any proper appreciation of Indian art in the West. If anything, it was condemned as 'monstrous', 'debased', 'uncouth', 'unimaginative', 'barbarous', 'erotic' and similar other terms.

There was a reason for this. In the beginning, for the Europeans, it was a 'culture shock' to see things 'unnatural' in art. How could there be a god with several hands and several heads? God has necessarily to be in the image of man, man with only two hands and one head. It could only be a monster. How could the genitals appear nudely in the images of gods, they argued, except in terms of 'most primitive' thought and practice? How could scenes of coupulation be presented on the walls of the House of God except the House of God being the House of Sins?

On the very face of it, these Europeans, under the impact of 'culture shock' failed to understand the lofty thoughts, ideas and ideals underlying these so-called 'unnatural' and 'uncivilised' phenomenae of Indian art. They knew nothing of the role of 'symbols' and 'symbolism' in Indian art and thought. Art as seen by eyes was all in all, real as well as imaginative. See them and talk about them in terms of 'world-of-eyes', i.e., the mundane world, why talk about the extramundane and transcendental, they argued.

In this evaluation, Christian morality and Christian belief-system of the Europeans also played a dominant role. Anything unmeasurable against them was beyond their sensibility. In Christianity symbols do not represent transcendental ideas. They are simply marks of a belief-system or event. Cross for example represents the incident of 'Crucifixion' of Christ not the transcendental Christ with a host of supernatural meanings. *Shiva-linga* for them was 'Phallus of Siva' and not the unmanifested principle of all creation. They did not bother to know that if it was a phallus which was worshipped how sons, daughters, parents, in-laws all did this so-called 'shameful' act sitting or standing together. 'Coupulation is physical enjoyment and birth of a child is out of sin, a continuation of the 'original sin' in Christian mythology. In India, coupulation is normal human behaviour like eating and sleeping and the birth of a child is the outcome of meritorious acts of the parents and not the outcome of sin committed by them or by the first pair of man and woman. In other words, the Hindu view of life has been so much opposite to the Christian view of life that it was beyond the capability of an ordinary Christian to comprehend the Hindu view of life and Hindu symbolism. It is due to this

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encounter of two seemingly opposed views of life or cultures that there was a lot of misunderstanding in the minds of early Europeans.

Things started changing in the 19th century, particularly due to many good translations of Sanskrit texts in English language. People started appreciating not only the literary part of the texts but also the highly philosophical contents of several of these texts. The West was, therefore, caught in a peculiar dilemma-if the Hindu literature, philosophy and thought were so high, how could Hindu art be debase? While some of the Art critics in the West started debating the principles of 'good art', others separated art from literature; for example Ruskin condemned the idols as 'evil idolatry', 'ignoable', 'false', confined to inferior race but praised Sanskrit literature.

The real break-through took place when Havell started writing about Indian art with reference to Indian cultural ethos. However, it was Coomaraswamy whose writings established the real greatness of Indian art in the West. However, as Partha Mittar has pointed out, sometimes his approach also became lop-sided because of total reliance on the spiritual content of Indian art; the many other aspects of art got grossly neglected. The future of Indian Art History depends in balancing this somewhat disabalanced emphasis. My task here will be exactly this: balancing the unbalanced.

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF INDIAN 'ART HISTORY'

In order to understand the changing scenario of Indian Art Appreciation in the West over the last 700 years, I have here proposed the following periodization. The source-book for this has mainly being Partha's *Much Maligned Monsters* (Oxford, 1977) although the scheme and pattern is mine.

Period I : The Opening Phase (13th-15th century)

(The period of casual travellers reacting to Indian Gods in terms of Biblical Demons.)

THE ERA OF 'MONSTERS' : The West-East counter.

Period II : The Early Phase (16th-17th century)

(The period of west coming to east with Christian prejudices)

THE ERA OF CULTURE-SOCK : Christianity vs Paganism.

Period III : The Middle Phase (18th-19th century)

(The colonial period of the studies in non-European cultures)

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THE ERA OF SYNCRETIZING ANTIQUARIANISM OR COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY AND BELIEF SYSTEMS IN ETHNOLOGICAL STUDIES.

Period IV : The Late Phase (20th century)

(The period of sympathetic understanding)

THE ERA OF NATIONAL AWAKENING

Period V : The Future (21st century)

(The period of scientific methodology)

THE ERA OF HOLISTIC APPROACH

PERIOD I (1300-1500)

We can begin our story from Italian traveller Marco Polo who had travelled to China (1271-1295) to join his uncle working in the Chinese King's court through South India. His travel accounts make mention of well known *Devadasis* of the temples of Coromandel coast. There is an illustrated manuscript in the 'manuscript section' of the Bibliothec Nationale, Paris entitled 'Le Livre des Merveilles' dated to 1413. Here this theme has been put into painting depicting five ladies dressed in long flowing robes and hand-in-hand as if dancing, the sixth one offering sweets filled in boxes to a similarly dressed black female standing akimbo on a pedestal held on two short classical pillars-in one hand she, the supposed to be the image of the Hindu god, holds a long feather. It is mockery of the reality in costume, image, emblems, etc. but that is all that could be done by an European artist who had neither seen India or Indians but had a stereotyped image fed to Europeans in the middle ages. He gave European clothing to Indian girls and made them do the same as the Christian nuns in seminaries.

There was yet another distortion of India gods in the western travel accounts and literature. It was that of monster and a devil. The monster existed in the Greek sources of the early Christian era like Pliny, Solinus and pseudo-Callisthenics. The Greek mythologies are full of strange and fantastic creatures inhabiting the universe-centaurs, sirens, satyrs and harpies in which man and animal features combined. The Greeks also imagined that there are monstrous races living in the east, particularly in India.

This classical tradition of monster, i.e., unnatural being, was quite popular in the middle ages in Europe as we get fantastic descriptions of these awfully looking monsters in imaginative worlds. One of these monsters was multi-armed like many Indian gods. The middle age Europe was the age of Christianity. In

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Christianity, the idea of monster became a 'belief' i.e. monster do exist with many supernatural powers because of divine will but all of them paid homage to Christian god. This mingling of the two traditions, imaginative and real, confused every one and it is in this state of affairs that when the traveller came to India and saw the multi-handed images, they immediately correlated them with the Christian monsters. Eureka! They found the monsters. In the Far East also, when similar looking, Buddhist images were found by them, they said their origin laid in India. In several 15th century books, this was repeatedly stated as in the *Nuremberg Chronicle.* (1493).

Indian religions are included in 'pagan' religions and from the earliest time Christian chruch maintained that pagan religions were invented by devils who were wicked, most foul and unclean. These were evil spirits, some of which goat-beared, cloven hooves and satyr. There was also the existence of Satan and his host of demons who were composite creatures like centaurs, half human and half animal or bird. The concept of Christian hell is also closely associated with it.

"Thus by the late medieval period, an elaborate and in many ways frightening imagery of demons and hell had grown, consisting of elements from diverse sources. The point to bear in mind here is that the two traditions, the classical one, of the monstrous races, and the Christian one, of demons, converged at some stage in medieval history. Later on Indian Gods were also lumped with it."

This was the general cultural background of the Middle Ages European travellers who came to India and narrated their accounts on their return to their countries in awful terms, spicy, strange, fabulous, and monstrous when describing images of Hindu gods. In other words, although these travellers' accounts concerned the Hindu gods, the descriptions themselves were of the Christian satan, devil and demon and the total picture of the Christian hell. 'After all, had not the Church fathers taught that all Pagan gods were demons and devils?'

Period II (1500-1700)

In tendencies, it was an extension of the Period I - following the same Christian model of hell, satan and devils, the European travellers in India, whose numbers started increasing, mainly due to the increase of Western trade with India, on the West coast, described the Hindu images in terms of monsters but with one significant difference: some of them also said that the Hindus though worshipped so many devils, they believed in one supreme god like the Christians.

This period of printing press, starts with the publication of a very popular illustrated book entitled 'Itinirario', which saw many editions and translations in

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many European languages in subsequent years, of the travel accounts of an Italian traveller from the city of Bologna who visited south India between 1503 and 1508. This book also described a chapel in the palace of the king of Calicut with fearsome images of gods.

"In the midst of this chapel there is a devil made of metal, placed in a seat also made of metal. The said devil has a crown made like that of the papal kingdom with three crowns; it has also four horns and four teeth with a very large mouth, nose, and most terrible eyes. The hands are made like those of flesh-hook and the feet like those of a cock; so that he is fearful object to behold. All the pictures around the said chapel are those of devils, and on each side of it there is a Sathanas, which seat is placed in a flame of fire, wherein are a great number of souls, of the length of half a finger and a finger of the hand, and the said Sathanas hold a soul in his mouth with right hand, and with the other seizes a soul by the waist."

Block prints prepared by the painters of these visual pictures based upon oral descriptions of travellers adorned books of various kinds in Europe of the 16th-18th centuries. Ralf Fitch, who visited Bijapur between 1583 and 1593, describes the Hindu gods in temples in similar words: 'devils with four arms' 'many of them are black' 'rides upon peacocks and other foules'. William Finch who came during Akbar's time, in 1608-11, also describes the Hindu 'Dew' 'made in monstrous shapes'. Such stereotype description of the Hindu gods are found in many other later writings of travellers like J.H. Van Linschoten who visited India in late 16th century (1583-1588), Sir Thomas Herbert who visited India in early 17th century, Travernier and Bernier who visited India in the late 17th century. In the 16th century (1548-1556 publication) itself mythographic manuals with such figures were published as gods to practising artists, for example the one called 'The Images of the Gods' by V. Cartari.

It may, however, be noted that in the 16th century, the Portuguese had conquered Goa and there was great opportunity for closer study of Indian art by Europeans. For example, one Andrea Corsali from Florence in Italy wrote from Goa to the Duke of Medici in 1515.

"In this land of Goa and the whole of India there are numerous ancient edifices of the Pagans. In a small island nearby called Divari, the Portuguese in order to build the land of Goa have destroyed an ancient temple called Pagoda, which was built with a marvellous artifice, with ancient figures of a certain black stone worked with the greatest perfection. If I could obtain one of these sculptures thus ruined, I would have sent it to your lordship, so that you may judge in what great esteem sculpture was held in antiquity."

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During this period some of the Western travellers, including Jesuit Fathers, saw with awe and admiration the rock-cut temples of Elephanta, Kanheri and Mandapeshwar. 'Initially these temples suffered in the hands of religious zealots as attempts were made to convert them into Christian churches' for example, one of the Elephanta caves from which all Hindu images (of devils) were removed, still persons like father Gasper 'reported that many monuments of skill and magnificence were to be seen in India. Father Maffei (1588) also observed about temples, 'which are able to compete in magnificence with the most superb of ancient Rome'. Visitors to Kanheri caves also reacted in somewhat similar vein-condemning the images of gods as monsterous but admiring the rock-cut monuments for their sheer skill and beauty.

Similar appreciation of rock-cut temples of Ellora are found in late 17th century writings, for example of Jean Thevenot, who observed, 'everything there is extermely well-cut, and it is really a wonder to see so great mass in Air, which seems so slenderly under-propped that one can hardly forbear to shiver at first entering into it'. The monuments of Vijayanagar also snatched great admiration from travellers like Domingo Paes. Sir Thomas Roe, who visited India during Jehangir's period in the 17th century, on the other hand, talked about the greatness and grandeur of north Indian monuments, such as those of Nagarkot as 'most richly set forth, both sealed and paved with plate of pure gold'. He also admired the monuments of Chittor. Some European artists, it may be noted, depicted Indian temples in the form of Christian churches of Europe telling people their greatness. Partha summarises the status of things in the following words.

"Historically speaking, two traditions grew out of travel reports, giving to essentially conflicting, if not outright contradictory, views about Indian art. According to the first, Indian art consisted of nothing but irrational monsters and horrific demons. The other saw the elegance and grandeur of the temples as clearly proving classical origins. Some even went so far as to find historical links with Alexander. In short, neither approach look into account the essential qualities of Indian art."

Period III (1700-1900)

During this period the Europeans colonied many parts of the East and established their empires. India too became subservient to England. Europe itself had changed a lot — from the Middle Ages it changed to Renaissance, from the 15th through the 17th century; the spirit of renaissance in terms of humanistic approach to life now reached its culmination. Vigorous studies in the life and culture of the natives became both the necessity of the emerging bureaucracy trying to rule intelligently and justly and academic interest of many intellectuals. It was

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coupled with a new sense of antiquarians, desire to learn and understand the culture, religion and philosophy of not only the ruled peoples but also of the peoples of other parts of the world, for example the Greeks and the Egyptians. Out of these studies emerged the disciplines of Comparative Religions, Comparative Mythology and Comparative Philology. Scholars started finding out similarities existing in religion, mythology and languages of many peoples in many parts of the world, more so in the oriental countries. This led to the birth and growth of many theories, the basis of which was what is called 'syncretic antiquarians' i.e., similar rituals had been taking place in many parts of the world and may be they all can be explained by common belief-systems. For example, the phallus played an important role not only in India but also in Greek and the Roman world. People in Rome used to wear small pieces of phallus shaped stones in the neck to ward of evil. In fact, sexual symbols were now found in everyday life by many tribal peoples also. Ethnological studies were conducted and information on this subject gathered by scholars. It was also found that before the introduction of Christianity, many people in Europe practised rituals in which sex symbols were freely, frankly and widely used. Frazer's 'Golden Bough' collected a mine of information on this subject. It was, therefore, realised that there was nothing obscene or erotic in phallus worship in India, it was just the symbolic representation in the context of procreation or fertility cult. It was seen in the light of nude female worship also as Mother Goddess. One M.V. Croze wrote in 1724 that the *Linga* worship was essentially the worship of Osiris and Classical Bacchus. Right or wrong, the important thing to note is that 'the new syncretism had a very important effect on European appreciation of Indian iconography: now the unfamiliar Indian pantheon could be brought within a known frame of reference and could be discussed in a language familiar to the erudits all over the West.' In this context, the 1784 article of Sir William Jones, entitled' on the Gods of Greece, Italy and India' is considered a landmark. In some quarters, it was also realised that the Hindu theology was very different from that of the ancient pagans.

The changes which were occurring was the outcome of the study and translation of Sanskrit texts also like *Sakuntalam* by W. Jones and *Bhagwat Gita* by C. Wilkins.

Similarly, archaeological studies in India and the West also helped in removing the 'Monster Model' of Indian Gods.

Payne Knight, Hancarville, Dupuis and several other scholars in the West looked at the Indian Art, the European Art and the World Art in universal terms

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and basic human reactions to the world of phenomenon, generally in mystical terms. Not only that, attempts were made to locate a single origin of these phenomenae.

During this period, one more approach is seen amongst the scholars of religions. They 'relate the mystical doctrines about sacred and profane love to androgynous divinities in ancient classical religion', in India such as the *Ardhanariśvara* form of Śiva. According to Knight, 'the union of two sexes in Hinduism was meant to express the creative powers of the deity'.

Although the 'Monster Model' had now collapsed during this period, it may be noted that it did imply proper aesthetic study, stylistic approach or real meaning underlying the images. However, studies in temple architecture became a major task with many acholars, the most outstanding amongst them was Ram Raz who very rightly did not subscribe to the views that the Indian temple architecture had Egyptian connections. He emphasised that the art and architeture in India should be classified and studied in terms of their own products.

Period IV (20th Century)

The 20th century has been dominated by two scholars. E.B. Havell and Anand Kentish Coomaraswamy. Havell's work *The Ideal of Indian Art* was published in 1911 while Coomaraswamy's *Art of India and Indonesia* was published in 1927. Of course, both of them wrote many other things, Coomaraswamy particularly wrote extensively on the subject of underlying meaning of Indian art. Havell wrote his book with the specific purpose that the West's indifference to the proper appreciation of Indian art is to be overcome by a sympathetic approach. Havell stated clearly that the Indian Art should not be judged on classical terms. He also argued for an intrinsically 'perceptual' approach to replace the 'conceptual' approach of the archaeologists'. Havell writes to establish the fact that the basis of standards of art criticism should be 'evolved within the Indian tradition instead of employing European standards which were extrancous to that tradition since the Indian artists were influenced by the aesthetic conventions prevailing in their period and society'. He emphasised that it is not the imitation of 'nature', Indian art is basically an 'idea'. In Europe, on the other hand, the main plank was 'nature', a good art is that which fully imitates nature.

Coomaraswamy was the most remarkable personality, the real interpreter of Indian Art in the West. With his vast knowledge of many ancient religions and philosophies and command over several languages, he could finally convince the West about the greatness of Indian art which lies in the underlying 'concepts', and

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'ideals' embodied in the element of 'spirituality' of Indian thought. He took the Indian art on a very high level and emphasised that it is through the practice of 'yoga' that the Indian art expressed its spirituality. He convinced the world that the transcendental appearance of Indian gods is more real to Indian mind than the nature *perse.* Nature transcends itself in the realm of thought and art. His *Dance of Shiva (1920)* and *The Transformation of Nature in Art (1934)* made the West see the greatness of Indian art in no uncertain terms. However, the swing perhaps too much to 'spirituality' in which India prided itself from the late 19th through the 20th century during which the intense Nationalist movements took place with Coomarswamy opting for everything *swadeshi* in the framework of 'Gandhian Thought'.

Future (21st century)

In our most considered view, we should evolve a 'Holistic approach' to the study of Indian art. Holistic approach presupposes that the Indian view of life is based upon the concept of *Chatur-purusharthas, Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha.* Each one is equally important and all of them are mutually complementary sustaining the human life in an orderly society. Not only *Nivritti* but also *Privitti* plays equally important part. That is why with the Buddha images of the former category, the *Salabhanjikas* of the latter category exist and that too side by side.

From yet another point of view our study should include the following all together:

(i) Determination of styles

(ii) Determination of stages of development

(iii) Determination of vision History of Indian thought and the visualisation of thoughts in visuals.

(iv) Indian views of aesthetic and examples of Indian art illustrating them.

(v) Technical aspects of carving and painting.

(vi) Iconography and Iconometry

(vii) Formal aspects of the images

(viii) Social and economic background of Indian art, artists and artisans

(ix) Epigraphical, Numismatical and Gyptic Art as subsidiary sources of Art

(x) Comparative studies

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1

WHAT IS LINGAM IN ŚAIVISM ?

*Haripriya Rangarajan**

What is *Lingam* ? Is it merely a stone or a marble pillar or a phallic symbol that had been worshipped by the pre-Aryans? or does it denote any thing beyond the significant phallic symbol in Śaivism?

Based on the archaeological finds from Indus Valley, some scholars believe that *Lingam* or *Linga* in the form of a phallic symbol was being worshipped by the pre-Aryan society. It means even before the Vedic cult emerged in India, the worship of *Linga* was prevalent in the society with a difference. To make it clear from the earliest known times the symbolic representation or the material representation of *Linga* in the form of phallus was being worshipped by the people without giving any metaphysical meaning to it except for the fertility symbol. But to the followers of Vedic cult this worship was a new phenomenon which they looked with contempt. From the Vedic passages we understand that in the beginning the Vedic Aryans could not subscribe to the concept of phallic worship. In two vedic passages, the word '*śiśnadevah*' occurs which means those who held a phallus for their deity.[1]

In the post Vedic period there appeared a change in understanding the concept of *Linga*. Thus the non-Aryan phallus symbol came to be associated with the generative power of Śiva for creation of the universe. It was further identified with '*Skambha*' or sacrificial pillar. The word '*Skambha*' in *Atharva Veda* (19, 53, 54) is identified with Supreme Śiva, who is the creator of Hiraṇyagarbha or *pūrṇapuruṣa*. It may be the reason that in the Vedic rituals *linga* was symbolised as sacrificial pillar or *yūpa*. M.L. Nigam on the basis of Allahabad Museum Pillar inscription, opines that wherever *yūpas* were erected earlier by the donors, Śiva temples were also built to indicate the title of Śiva as '*Sthāṇu*' or '*Skambha*' and

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* Lady Governor of Andhra Pradesh and eminent art - historian.

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to emphasize the pillar concept of *linga*.[2] In the words of Soundara Rajan "The Agni cult of the Vedic period merged with the Rudra cult in the late and post-vedic times resulting in a mutual cosmos, and Śiva in *Linga* form was sequal to it. The *Linga* form of Śiva is nothing but the pristine sacrificial pillar or symbolically the pillar of fire, as described in the *Mahābhārata,* and its esoteric overtones, linking with the phallus was much later phenomenon".[3]

The above statement would therefore make us conclude that in post Vedic era there occurred a fusion of the *Linga* form of the Non-Aryan society with the Rudra of the Vedic thought, who is found associated with Agni, that resulted in the concept of "Flaming Pillar" which denotes Śiva.

The term *Linga* is more often found in the Upaniṣads. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II, iii, 8) and *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* (I, 13) elaborate on the connotation of *Linga*. The *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* (forming Book 10 of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*) describes the religious significance of Śiva *lingas* by the series of *ślokas*. They are dedicated mainly to correlate *Lingas* with Rudra - Śiva. In these *ślokas* (271 - 316) homage is first given to a particular power or attribute of the Supreme and then to the *linga* of that power or attribute.

ऊर्द्धाय नमः ऊर्द्धलिङ्गाय नमः।

हिरण्याय नमः हिरण्यलिङ्गाय नमः।

सुवर्णाय नमः सुवर्णलिङ्गाय नमः।

दिव्याय नमः दिव्यलिङ्गाय नमः।

भवाय नमः भवलिङ्गाय नमः।

सर्वाय नमः सर्वलिङ्गाय नमः।

शिवाय नमः शिवलिङ्गाय नमः।

ज्वलाय नमः ज्वललिङ्गाय नमः।

आत्माय नमः आत्मलिङ्गाय नमः।

परमाय नमः परमलिङ्गाय नमः।

Mahanārāyaṇa Upaniṣad : Section 16, śl.1 (intro, Tr, interpretation in Sanskrit by Swami Vimalananda, Ramakisna Mutt, Madras, 1957.)

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In this prayer homage is given to the raised *Linga,* the golden *Linga,* the bright *Linga,* the celestial *Linga,* the flame *Linga,* the ātma *Linga* and the supreme *Linga.*

The etymology of the word *Lingam* expresses the theological belief in the immanence of the transcendental nature of Śiva. Etymologically the word *Lingam* has two parts. 'Li' means to dissolve and 'gam' means to move on. "*Lingam* denotes the phenomenon of appearing into *sthala* or space, as Being, and then disappearing into the cosmic again, the *lingam,* the *sthala* is thus the Absolute, the potent cosmic in stillness, the Śivam".[4]

To the Vedantins *Sat - Cit - Ānanda* is the Being or the *Brahama* where as to the siddhantins the *Brahama* is Śiva. He is also known as Īśvara and his alter ego is Īśvarī. In the *Linga,* the abstract form of the Śiva concept is crystelised. *Linga* is conceived as Śiva himself in his *niṣkalā* form (formless) in which state the supreme Being has no beginning, no limit, no ending, or no boundary and is pervading everywhere. He is subtle and supreme and unknowable by any mode of proof. The subtle concept of Śiva could be imaged only through symbolism. The *Yoga Vāśiṣṭha* says that *Linga Ātman* is purely a mental contemplation. But to contemplate an ideal totality is very difficult for *jīva.* Therefore *Linga Ātman* in the *Linga* form helps the *jīva* in its endeavour.[5] In this even if its shape is confused with the phallus it is in no way reminding any offence. From the same text we understand that *Ṛṣi* Vaśiṣṭha requests Lord Śiva to explain the forms of worship. Śiva advises him that of all the forms of worship *Anta - r - linga* worship or worshipping mentally the Ultimate - Reality in its subtle formlessness with spiritual accessories and offerings alone is the best.[6] The dialogue of Śiva and Vaśiṣṭha indicates that Ultimate - Reality is Śiva who in the *Linga* form helps the devotee to understand the transcendental idea of them as one and the same.

We may agree with the opinion of M.C. Joshi when he says that the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas perhaps adapted the theory of emanation of the *Vyūha* concept of Vaiṣṇavism. In his own words "In fact, in these images (*Lingas*), and in the case of the original Vaiṣṇava doctrine, the theme is one and the same, i.e., the emergence of *Vyakta* from *avyakta* or emanation of *Sakalā* Śiva from *niṣkalā* Śiva, the central *Linga* itself being some sort of a *Skambha,* the preliminary perceptible manifestation of the god in the process of creation".[7]

While describing the philosophical aspect of *Linga,* our observation will not be complete unless we understand the three *tattvas* that underlie in it. These *tattvas* are (1) Śiva tattva (2) Sadāśiva tattva (3) Maheśa tattva. While the Śiva *tattva* is identified with the *niṣkalā* aspect of Supreme, the *sakalā niṣkalā tattva*

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(form - formless) is identified with Sadāśiva. Similarly *sakalā tattva* (form) is identified with Maheśa. At the end of an aeonic destruction in order to create *śuddha tattvas* and *śuddha bhuvanas,* Śiva with his self emerges a thousandth part as Parāśakti. From her, one thousandth part comes out as Ādiśakti. From one thousandth part of Ādiśakti emerges Ichchhā Śakti. From one thousandth part of *Ichchhā śakti* comes out *Jñānaśakti.* Again from her one thousandth part emerges *Kriyāśakti.* From the tenth portion of five *Śaktis* appear five different Sadāśiva *Tattvas* which produce *niṣkalā* and *sakalā* form of *Lingas.* For example, while the tenth portion of each *Parāśakti* and *Ādiśakti* produce *niṣkalā* form of *Lingas* respectively, the tenth portion of *Ichchhāśakti, Jñāaśakti* and *kriyāśakti* produce *Lingas* in *sakalā* form.[8] The description of *tattvas* is given in the following table:-

Name of the Sakti	Tattva and characteric features of the *lingas.*
From the tenth portion of the Parāśakti. 1. *Śivatattva* or *Śivasādākhya*	emerges the first *Sadāśiva tattva.* As it is born of Parāśakti (formless) it is called Śiva. It is characterised by its omnipresence and brightness of a subtle divine light that pervades the space in the Universe in *niṣkalā* form. In the *pañcabhūta* element this *tattva* is related to *Ākāśa* or space.
From the tenth portion of the *Adiśakti.* 2. *Īsana tattva* or *Amurtta Sādākhya*	emerges the second Sadāśiva *tattva.* It is called Īśāna. As Ādiśakti is formless, this is also *amūrtasādākhya* which means *niṣkalā* like Śiva tattva. This tattva exists as a luminous pillar called *Divyalinga* or *Mūlasthambha.* According to the *Suprabhedāgama* everything in this universe takes its origin from the *Mūlasthambha* and ends finally in it, therefore it is called *Linga.*[9] This *tattva* is related to *pṛthvī* of *pañcabhūtas* and according to the universal law every *jīva* takes its birth from the *pṛthvī bhūta* and merges into the same.
3. From the tenth portion of *Ichchhāśakti.* *Brahmā* or *Murtasādākhya*	evolves third *Sadāśiva śakti - Mūrtasādākhya.* It is called *Brahmā.* Because this *tattva* has form, it is called *Mūrta* or *Sakalā.* This *tattva* exists in Divyalinga with the brightness of fire and having flames of fire playing round it. On the top of this *Linga* is a figure with a beautiful face having three eyes, four arms and all other limbs. It carries *paraśu*

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and *mṛga* in its two hands and other two hands are shown in *varada mudrā* and *abhaya mudrā.*[10] In the *pañcabhūta* element, this *tattva* is related to *Agni.*

4. From the tenth portion of *Jñānaśakti. Īsvara* or *Kartrisādākhya.*

emerges fourth Sadāśiva *tattva* Kartrisādākhya called Īśvara. This tattva believed to be existing in the form of Divyalinga of immeasurable length and girth. It is characterised by its crystal clearness. In this *Lingsa,* Śiva resides with four faces, twelve eyes, eight ears and arms and two legs. It has *śūla, paraśu, khaḍga,* and *abhaya mudrā* in the right hands and *pāśa, sarpa, ghaṇṭ a* and *varada mudrā* in the left hands.[11]

5. From the tenth portion of *Kriyāśakti. Īśāna* or *Karma Sādākhya*

emerges fifth *Sadāśiva tattva - Karmasādākhya* is known as *Īśāna.* It is called *Karma* because the nature of this *tattva* is of *kriyā.* In this *tattva, Linga* is set upon the *pīṭha.* The deity Īśāna in the *Karmasāda tattva* has a perfectly white body resembling the flower of a kunda (a kind of jasmine), or the full moon. He has five heads adorned with *jaṭa mukuṭas* and have on each face three eyes. He has ten arms and two legs. He is standing on a *padmāsana* and keeps in his right hands the *śūla, paruśu, khaḍga, vajra* and *abhaya mudrā.* In the left hands the *nāga, pāśa, ankuśa, ghaṇṭa* and *agni.* These five faces of the deity have five names and they occupy four directions and the top of the *Linga.* The one facing the east is that of Tatpuruṣa and that facing the south is Aghora. The one facing the west is Sadyojāta and north facing is Vāmadeva, the face of Sadāśiva is on the top".[12]

According to the *Śaiva Siddhānta* all the ceremonials like installation (*sthāpana*) should be done only for the east face Īśāna. The other faces are meant for the meditation of those who have attended perfection of *yoga, mantra* and *siddhi.* It is very interesting to note that all the present *Śaiva Āgamas* are said to be given by these five faces of Tatpuruṣa, Aghora, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva and Sadāśiva (Īśāna).

In the *Linga Purāṇa,* Chapter 23 of the *Pūrvabhāga* explains the Īśvara *tattva* in this manner. It names the top face as Viśvarūpa instead of the more usual name of Sadāśiva. According to this Purāṇa the four faces are emanated from the

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top face. They represent four elemental forms of Śiva in this order. Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Tatpuruṣa and Aghora. The Sadāśiva face is said to be the father of the preceeding four and thus as the sons of Viśvarūpa all creations are four fold.[13] The emanations of the Caturmukha form of Śiva reminds us of the Caturvyūha form of Viṣṇu.

Thus the above description of *Pañcatattvas* clearly indicates that the *linga* of Śaivism can be perceived in two forms, *niṣkalā* (formless) and *sakalā* (iconic form).[14]

Symbolic worship of linga - niṣkalā form:

As we said earlier the first *tattva* called Śiva *tattva* symbolizes the *niṣkalā* nature of Śiva. It is characterised by its vastness in the universe which is related to one of the *pañcabhūtas, Ākāśa.* A fine example of this *tattva* (*ākāśatattva*) can be experiensed by the devotees in the Naṭarāja temple at Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu. This place itself is called *Ākāśa Kṣetra.* Inside the temple on the right side of Lord Naṭaraja's sanctum is located the famous Chidambara *Rahasyam* (or *Rahasya*). Here there is no *Linga* in the *garbhagṛha,* but it is a garland of golden vilva leaves to which worship is done. As soon as the *deepa ārādhanā* is performed to the deity Naṭarāja, the same is performed to the Chidambaram *Rahasya,* i.e., to say *ārādhanā* is performed to the vilva leaves. Only here Patanjali wrote the *Yoga sūtra.*[15] The second *tattva,* Īśānatattva symbolised in the *Linga* form of Pṛthvi element is still in worship in Kānchīpuram (Tamilnadu). This place is called *Pṛthvī kṣetra.* Here the *Linga* is made of sand and therefore it is always covered with *kavaca.* The *Linga* deity is called *Ekāmbareśvara.* The legend says that once Pārvatī in amusement closed the eyes of Lord Śiva with her hands and the whole universe was plunged into darkness. Enraged Śiva asked her to do penance on the earth. Pārvatī in Kānchīpuram made a figure of Śiva *linga* of sand and did the penance. Śiva wanted to test her penance and caused a flood. To save the sand *Linga* from the flood she held the *Linga* against her chest. The Lord was pleased and asked her to go to Tiruvaṇṇāmalai to do penance there also. There is a mango tree in the shrine of Ekāmbareśvara in Kānchīpuram which is said to be 3600 years old according to Botanical experts. It is said that Pārvatī worshipped Lord Śiva in the form of *Linga* under this mango tree. Even today great sanctity is attached to this tree and is considered to be a boon giving tree for the devotees.[16]

The third *tattva* symbolised in the *Linga* form relating with fire element is still in worship in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai (Tamil Nadu). This place is called *agnikṣetra* (or Tejas Kṣetra), one of the *pañca-bhūtas* (agni). It is also known as 'the hill of the Holy Beacon'. The deity in this *Linga* is called Aruṇāchalaeśvarar. In the month

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of *Kārtigai,* on the day of *Krittikā* constellation, a huge oil lamp is lit up at the top of the hill which is seen from miles around. It is to be noted that this is the only Śaiva temple in India where the lamp is lit on the Krittikā *nakṣatra* to indicate two factors (i) the fire nature of Śiva (ii) the significance of Kārtikeya who is the essence of Rudra - Śiva and born in Krittikā *nakṣatra.*

According to the *Sthala Purāṇa,* this place is associated with the legends of Lingodhbhava and Ardhanārīśvara. In the first legend Viṣṇu and Brahmā had a dispute over their superamacy. When they were so fighting Lord Śiva appeared between them in the form of a towering column of Fire. Leaving the dispute, Brahmā and Viṣṇu took the form of a swan and a boar, respectively tried to find out the beginning and end of the fire pillar. Not finding, they prayed to Lord Śiva and pleased with their prayers Śiva changed his form of a column of fire and became a *sthāvara linga* (steady *linga*) in the shape of Aruṇāchala hill. As the hill itself is considered to be a '*Jyotir Linga*', the pilgrims do *giripradakṣaṇa* of about fourteen kilometers by foot. The other legend is that Goddess Pārvatī after finishing her penance in Kānchīpuram was asked by Lord Śiva to go to Tiruvaṇṇāmalai (this place) to continue her penance. Accordingly she did it and became united with the Lord. Therefore the deity of this *Agnikṣetra* is also known as Ardhanāriśvara.[17]

In this context a mention may be made for two other Lingas in relation to the two elements of pañcabhūta, Vāyu and Āpa. In the sanctum of Kālahasti temple in Andhra Pradesh, the *Lingam* is worshipped in the form of Vāyu *Lingam.* The deity is called Kālahastīśvara. Here the *deepa* in the sanctum is always moving to and fro mildly because of slight breeze. Till today one does not know from where this mild breeze comes? This *Linga* is popularly called Vāyu *Linga.* The other element water is attached to the *Linga* in the temple at Tiruvānaikkāval located near Śrī Rangam, Tamil Nadu. Here all the twenty four hours, water flows below the *pīṭha* of *Lingam* and is seen flowing in the sanctum. This *Lingam* is called *Jalalingam,* the name of the deity is Jambukeśvarar.[18]

Iconic worship of Linga:

Among the *sakalā* forms of Śiva the Caturmukha *Linga* is very interesting. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa,* in this form the image of Śiva *Linga* is shown with four human faces carved on its four sides and the fifth face is shown on the top of the *Linga.* This type of image with the central *Śivalinga* (and faces) is shown to represent the five primal elements *pañcabhūtas:* earth (*kṣiti*), water (āpa), fire (*tejah*), air (*mārut*), and void (*vyoma*). In this image, while the first four elements are represented by the four faces on the sides, the fifth element void is represented by the top face. In this form, Śiva is called by the names, *Pañcamukha,*

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Pañcānana and *Pañcavaktra*. It is to be noted that in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* the eastern face is said to be of Sadyojāta - Mahādeva where as in the *Śaiva Siddhanta* the face of Sadyojāta is said to be of Brahmā and facing west.[19]

The antiquity of the *sakalā* form (the iconography) of *linga* related with fourth and fifth *tattvas* (*Mūrtaya tattva*) can be traced back to the second century B.C. If we look into the religious history of India no image of Śiva in any form is found in the Mauryan period. During the Śunga age (second - first century B.C.) we find fewer images of Śiva - *linga* in iconic form. During the Kuṣāṇa period (first - third century A.D.), large number of icons of *Linga* with faces of the diety have been found in Mathurā. According to N.P. Joshi, during this period the iconic description of Śiva in the plastic form began to take shape which developed fully in the Gupta period (fourth - sixth century A.D.).[20]

Soundara Rajan opines that a separate *Linga-cult* appears to have emerged sometime at the beginning of the Christian era. The devotees of the *Linga-cult* carried the Śiva-linga on their shoulders. The Nāga-Bharashivas of Padmāvati are said to have carried Śiva-lingas on their body. In order to support to this hypothesis, we find a number of Śiva-figures, carrying Śiva-linga in Deccan and South India. A Śiva-figure carrying linga at the back is known from Ellora. A similar figure of Śiva, seated with Pārvatī is presently kept in the premises of the office of Directorate of archaeology, Hyderabad. Śiva is shown fondling the *Linga* at his back side, M.L. Nigam has attributed this sculpture to Vishṇukuṇḍis, datable to the 6th Century A.D.[21]

The earliest example of a plain *linga* (*sthanu*) is found from Reh with an Indo-Bacterian inscription.[22] N.P. Joshi has reported several important *Linga* types from Mathurā and Bhita region. An image of *Ekamukha Linga* belonging to the pre - kuṣāṇa period is presently preserved in the Philadelphia University Museum of art. Here "the figure of two - armed Śiva is shown standing against a *linga*. His right hand is raised in *abhayamudrā* and the left hand holds a small vase. Śiva is well clad, wears a headgear and probably ithyphallic. On the reverse side of the *Linga*, the complete shape of the phallus coiled with a floral wreath on the nut portion is seen. On the pedestal an inscription of one line is there of which a few letters are preserved".[23] Another image of the same period found from Aghapura, U.P. It is in the Government Museum, Bharatpur.

A very unique form of the Śiva image over the *Linga* located in Guḍimallam (Andhra Pradesh) is an ideal example of a proto Purāṇic Śiva closer to the concept of Vedic Rudra. This has been identified by T.A. Gopinatha Rao as *Lingodhbhava*. It is datable to the first century A.D.[24]

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Lastly one may ask a question how that Śiva is being worshipped both in *niṣkalā* and sakalā form while other deities are being worshipped only in the *sakalā* form? In the *Śiva Purāṇa,* in the *Viśveśvara Saṁhitā* (adh. 25, śl. 9-16) Sūta says that Śiva Himself has said that Śiva alone is glorified as *niṣkalā* (nameless and formless) since He is identical with Supreme Brahman. He is also *sakalā* as He has an embodied form. Since he has the *sakalā* and *niskalā* aspects, he is worshipped both in the phallic and in the embodied form by the people and is called the highest Brahman.

Now the last question before us is thus: how and when was the Cult of Linga worship started amidst the human civilization?

In the *Koṭirudra saṁhitā* of Śiva *Purāṇa* (adh.12.) a very interesting narration about Śiva's assuming the phallic form is explained. According to it, once the sages went to the forest to bring sacrificial twigs. In the meantime Śiva assuming a very hideous form came there to test their devotion. Standing naked and holding his penis, he began to show all sorts of vicious tricks. The wives of the sages were so excited that some started embracing him and others frightened at this sight. Meanwhile the sages came there and were terribly pained and infuriated by his perverse activities. They were so much deluded by Śiva's *māyā* that they started asking each other who that person was? When the naked sage did not reply, the great sages told him terrible *Puruṣa.* They cursed him by saying that because he was acting prevertedly, he violated the vedic path. Hence his penis would fall on the ground. When they said thus, the penis of the Avadhūta (who was the Supreme Śiva) fell down instantly. The penis burnt the whole universe. Even then they could not recognise the truth that the naked person was none other than Śiva. Then they went to Brahmā, the creator. He made them realise their mistake. The grand father of the world, Brahmā told them that as long as the penis would not become stationary there could not be anything good in the three worlds. This would be possible only by goddess Pārvatī. If she could assume the form of the vaginal passage then that penis would become steady. Brahmā explained to the sages to make an eight-petalled mystic diagram of lotus and place a pot over it. He instructed that water from holy centres should be pured into the pot along with the sprouts of *Durva* and barley. The pot should be invoked with vedic *mantras* and should be worshipped according to the vedic rituals after remembering Śiva. The penis should be drenched with that water end and when the sprinkling will be made with *Śatarudrīya mantras,* it would become stable. Brahmā further said that Pārvatī in the form of the vaginal passage should form as the pedestal wherein the phallus should be installed to the accompaniment of the vedic *mantras.* Lord Śiva should be worshipped by offering fragrant flowers, incense and food offerings. Further he

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should be propitiated with prostrations, holy hymns, musical instruments and songs. Then *Svastyāyana mantras* should be repeated and the sages should pray to Śiva. According to the advice of Brahmā, the sages worshipped Śiva and Lord Śiva was very much pleased. He told the sages that if his penis was supported in a vaginal passage there would be happiness. He further said that except Pārvatī no other women could hold his penis. Then the sages prayed to Pārvatī to help them. Pārvatī obliged them and the excellent penis became static. When the phallus was stabilised, there was welfare through out the worlds. That phallus became famous in three worlds.[25]

From the references given above, it is clear that the worship of phallus by the indegeneous people of India was not popular among the Aryans. Even the non-Aryans considered the phallic as a symbol of generation or Puruṣa. This is applicable not only to India but to other countries of primitive religions which consisted in the reverence and worship paid to nature and its operations. In the second stage it gained full support and accordingly it became the symbolic form of Śiva in stone and came to be known as *Linga*. According to B. Bhattacharya "during this period the indigeneous Śaiva concept of the Indian Yogis and the phallic concepts of the west had come to a kind of confrontation until it died out in the west in the flames of its own excesses, but survived in India nursed by the sublime metaphysical postulates of her scholars and the spiritual declarations of her realised yogis".[26] According to R.G. Bhandarkar, *Linga* worship had not come into practice at the time of Patanjali. In the Sūtra (V.3.99) there is a mention of an image of likeness of Śiva as an object of worship but no mention of any emblem of that god. Therefore he opines that the *Linga* concept must have crept into the society among the ordinary people who were in close contact with the uncivilised tribes and then gradually made its way to the higher classes. It is this final stage of its adoption by the higher classes that is cited in the discourse of Upamanyu in the *Mahābhārata*.[27] In the modern days, Śiva is worshipped universally only under this symbol of *Linga*. The worshippers of Śiva believe that Śiva is omnipresent, but he is specially worshipped in Jyotirlinga forms in twelve *tirtha kṣtras*. They are called twelve great (*Mahā*) *Lingas* or *Jyotirlingas* which are as follows:-

1. *Somanātha*: (Gujarat) means he is "Lord of the moon". In this name he is worshipped in *Linga* form in a place called Somanāth pāttan located in Saurashtra in Gujarat.

2. *Mallikārjuna* or *Śrī-Śaila*: (Andhra Pradesh) means the mountain of Śrī. The city itself is known as Śrī-Śailam which is located on the Śrī-Śaila or Śri mountain near the river Kṛṣṇa.

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3. *Mahā-Kāla, Mahā-kāleśwara*: (Madhya Pradesh) In this Linga he is in the form of *Mahā Kāla* - i.e., 'Time'. It is worshipped in Ujjain located on the bank of Kṣiprā. This is the only temple in India where every day 'ash' is brought from the burial ground to do *abhiṣekam* for *linga* at the very early morning from 3 A.M. to 6 A.M. The whole method of worshipping in the early morning is a spectacular feast for the eyes, mind and soul.

4. *Omkāreśvar*: (Madhya Pradesh) In this *Linga* form Śiva is worshipped as Mahādeva. It is situated on the mountain called Mandhāta or Śivapuri in Ujjain itself and at the foot hill Narmada river flows. This place is called Omkār-Mandhāta. One has to cross the river by boat to reach here.

5. *Ghruśneśwara*: (Maharashtra) In this name Śiva is worshipped in *Linga* form near Verula in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra.

6. *Baidyanātha*: (Bihar) In this *linga* form Śiva is worshipped as 'Lord of physicians'. The temple of Baidyanatha is a celebrated place of pilgrimae.

7. *Rāmeśa or Rāmeśvara*: (Tamil Nadu) in this *Linga* form he is worshipped as 'Lord of Rama'. The legend says that Rāma on the way to Lanka to fight with Rāvaṇa, came to this island, set up the *Lingam* and worshipped Śiva. That is why the name of this island has come to be known as Rāmeśwaram.

8. *Bhīma Śankara*: (Maharashtra) In this name Śiva is worshipped as Bhīmeśvara. It is placed in a village called Ḍākinī, but no body knows the village name.

9. *Viśveśvara*: (Uttar Pradesh) means 'Lord of all'. As Viśveśvara or popularly called Viśvanātha, he is worshipped in Banaras. The *linga* of this place is called Kāśi Viśveśvara of Kāśi Viśvanātha.

10. *Trayambakeśwars*: (Maharashtra) Here three lingas are enshrined in the temple - they are in three colours. The priest of the temple say that the three *Lingas* represent Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. But I presume that they may represent any three aspects of Śiva like Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora Vāmadeva, and Sadyojātha in individual *Linga* form.

11. *Nageśam in Dārukavanam*: (Gujarat) It is located near Dwarka. Here in the form of Lord of Nāga, Śiva is worshipped.

12. *Kedāreśam* or *Kedara-nātha*: (Himalaya) Kedārnāth, the place itself named after the *Linga's* name is in the Himalayas. Here the deity is not shaped like a *lingam* but represented as a shapless mass of rock.

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Thus Śiva, the universal Puruṣa is worshipped in the *Linga* form with the following *dhyanas*.

सौराष्ट्रे सोमनाथञ्च श्रीशैले मल्लिकार्जुनम्।
उज्जयिन्यां महाकालमोङ्कारं परमेश्वरम्।।
केदारं हिमवस्पृष्ठे डाकिन्यां भीमशंकरम्।
वारणास्याञ्च विश्वेशं त्र्यम्बकं गौतमीतटे।।
वैधनाथं चिताभूमौ नागेशं दारुकावने।
सेतुबन्धे च रामेशं घुश्मेशञ्च शिवालये।।
द्वादशैतानि नामानि प्रातरुत्थाय यः पठेत्।
सप्तजन्मकृतं पापं स्मरणेन विनश्यति।।
यं यं काममपेक्ष्यैव पठिष्यन्ति नरोत्तमाः।
तस्य तस्य फलप्राप्तिर्भविष्यति न संशयः।।
ऐतेषां दर्शनादेव पातकं नैव तिष्ठति।
कर्मक्षयो भवेत्तस्य यस्य तुष्टो महेश्वरः

Śiva Puranam, adh.38.

In a nut shell, we can say that *Linga's* significance came to be realized in the phallic symbolism in which no deity was involved. It was purely for generation purpose. In the second stage it took the shape of ritualistic symbol and being identified with *Yūpa* or sacrificial pillar which was then associated with Rudra-Śiva. In the third stage the same *Linga* was comprehended and realised by the intellectuals with the help of metaphysical ideas. Then *Linga* was identified with *niṣkalā* form of *Brahma* i.e. Śiva Himself who is the prime cause of all.

In the historical period *Linga* worship became a popular cult and gradually took a strong hold in Śaivism. In the modern days Śiva, the universal *puruṣa*, is worshipped universally only under this symbol of "*Linga*." A great sanctity is given to tweleve *Jyotir Lingas* in India. In one sentence '*Śiva*' and *Linga* can not be separated. If there is no *Linga* then there is no *Śiva*, because of which the word *Linga* has the prefix Śiva i.e. Śivalinga and not the name of any other deity.

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   सृष्टिकाले पुनस्सृष्टिस्तस्माल्लिङ्गमुदाहृतम्॥
   Suprabhedāgama (Copied from T.A. Gopinatha Rao) also see T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *ibid.,* p.364, fn 1.
10. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *ibid.,* p.365.
11. *Ibid.,* p.366 f.
12. *Ibid.,* p.366 ff.
13. In the *Linga Purāṇa,* adh,23 explains very explicitly the concept of these five *tattvas* and the five faces of Śiva in relation to the five *kalpas.*
14. In the *Linga Purāṇa* Brahmā asks Viṣṇu about Śiva. Viṣṇu replies that Śiva is a great mystery, the dimensional abode of intellect and the coveted goal of spiritualists. He splits himself into two. His unqualitative part remaines unmanifested; the qualitative one comes into appearance. They are *niṣkalā* and *sakalā* forms of Him. *Linga Purāṇa, ibid,* ch.20, śl. 75-79.
15. This is the legend described in the *Sthala Purāṇa* of Chidambaram.
16. See *Sthala Purāṇa* of Kanchipuram.
17. See *Sthala Purāṇa* of Tiruvannamalai.

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18. See *Sthala Purāṇa* of Kālahasti and Tiruvanaikkaval:

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2

DEPICTIONS OF ŚIVA WITH THREE FACES AND FOUR HANDS

N.P. Joshi*

In the field of art Śiva, for the first time, according to Dr. V.S. Wakanakar, appears in some of the rock paintings from Bhimbetakā in Madhya pradesh. Similarly the famous steatite sealing from Harappa has also been taken as bearing representation of seated Paśupati Śiva in *yogī* form. In the historic period earliest appearance of this god is to be noted on the copper coins, tribal issues-from Ujjaini datable to c. 2nd 1st century B.C. In some cases of this type, Śiva is three faced but two handed[1] carrying a *daṇḍa* in the right and *kamaṇḍalu* in the left. (Fig.1) This *daṇḍa* has been variously called as *Brahma-daṇḍa, Bilva-daṇḍa* and *Kāla-daṇḍa* in the Mahābhārata.[2] The three headed feature has also been referred to in this epic,[3] which describes the god as *trijaṭa, triśīrṣa* and *triśūla-vara-pāṇi*. In this connection it is worth noting that come clay sealings from Sankisa in Uttar Pradesh, datable to c. 1st century A.D., bearing the legend *Bhadrākṣasya* (now in the State Museum, Lucknow) show on their obverse Śiva with hair made in three knots over his head. He holds *triśūla* in his right hand, while the left is akimbo. The reverse bears the figure of a bull.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, one frequently comes across various depictions of Śiva both in the fields of numismaties and sculptures, specially from regions in the Gandhara and Mathura territories. Though contemporary, the two pockets evince two different styles. In brief the North-Western Śiva is *ghora* or fearful in appearance, while at Mathura he is benign with graceful features. Other points of difference, would however, be noted later. The three headed aspect is prominently seen on many of the coins hailing from the Gandhara regions. Let us take a running survey of Śiva figures on these coins.

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* Ex-Director, State Museum, Lukhnow. CK 1/13, Bhonsala mandir, Varanasi-221001.

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Rulers like Maus and Gondopheres have Śiva on their issues. As per Banerjea[4] he stands with a long trident in his right hand and a palm branch in his left. In a bronze sealing from Sirkap bearing the legend *Śivarakṣitasa*[5] the god appears with a club and trident in his hands. (Fig.3) Vema Kadphises and the three Kuṣāṇa kings nemely Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva and even some later Kuṣāṇa rulers have Śiva on their coins. Two forms of Śiva are evident on the coins of Vema (Fig. 4-6). In the first form naked Śiva is standing alone with *triśūla-paraśu* in his right hand and a water vese in the left. Some animal hide is seen suspended from his left arm. This could be either a lion skin or a bull skin. In the Mahābhārata[6], Śiva has been described as using a lion skin as his upper covering (*simha-carmottarachidaḥ*), while the Liṅga Purāṇa[7] call him carrying wet or fresh hide (ārdracarmadharaḥ). Some flames are also to be seen on Śiva's head, which indicates his association with Agni. Similarly his sacred thread with several plaques inserted justifies his name Upavītī. The next form seen on the coins of Vema is more peaceful and elegant. Here he puts on a *dhotī*, carries *triśūla* or *triśūla-paraśu* and bears flames on his head. His mount, the bull *Vṛṣa* stands behind. The *trimukha* aspect is conspicuously absent in any of the two forms.

On the coins of Kaniṣka we have four handed Śiva holding an inverted jar along with a goad, *vajra, triśūla* and an antelope (Fig. 7). He puts on a *dhotī* and *upavīta,* but some variations can be well marked in the positions of the antelope. The coins of Huviṣka evince some more forms. On some of them we have three headed and four armed Śiva. Among his attributes the inverted jar has been substituted by a *cakra* with six spokes. On other coins a water jar, *vajra* emitting rays, *triśūla* and even *gadā* can also be noticed. It is worth noting in this connection that the Mahābhārata[8] sometimes calls Śiva as Gadī. On a few coin types, the god appears with his consort Umā or Nānā. We have no parallel depiction of Śiva with his consort in the Gandhara art. Curiously enough some of the contemporary sculptures from Mathura do have this feature (e.g. Govt. Museum Mathura G. 52). It is significant to note that in early iconography Śiva is the only god, who appears with his wife.

The third ruler Vāsudeva was a devotee of Śiva. On his coins the following forms of the god can be well marked (Fig. 10-12):

(1) Three faced Śiva with a lotus, noose (*pāśa*), *triśūla* and *ghaṭa*, which also could have been a gourd or *tumbī*. The noose has a special significance in

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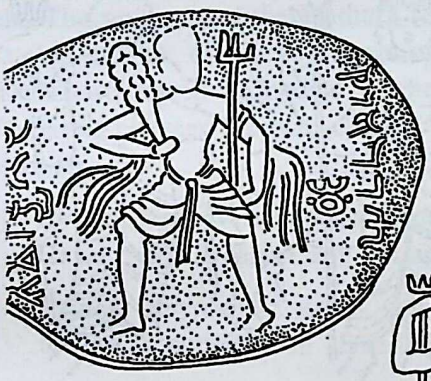
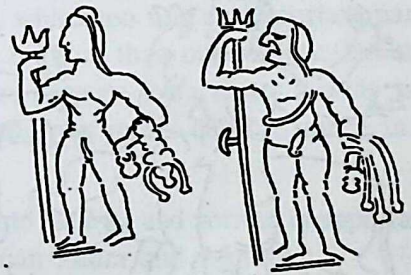
1. Śiva on Ujjaini Coin.

2. indian museum, Calcutta : Intaglio



3. Bronze Sealing, Sirkap



4-5

6.

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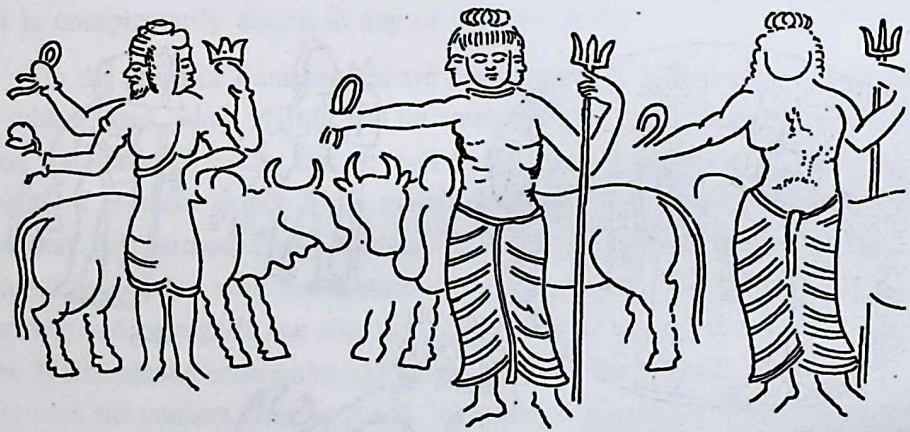
7. Kaniṣka, Huviṣka. DAK. 159, 161

8. Haviṣka. DAK. 164

9. Huviṣka. DAk. 163



10. DAK. 210

11. DAK. 206 Vāsudeva

12 DAK. 207

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Śaiva context. It stands for *Māyā* through which Śiva keeps all the beings tied together. Freedom from this boundage is enjoyed by his favourites only.

(2) Three faced or sometimes even one faced but two handed Śiva carriying the *pāśa* and *triśūla*. Behind him stands his bull.

(3) This type is fundementally the same as above, but here the god has more pleasing appearance.

(4) Usually the mount (*vāhana*) is the bull, but in very rare specimens it is an elephant. This need not be taken as something very unusual. On some of the coins of Kaniṣka Śiva carrying an *aṅkuśa* or goad has already been referred to. Moreover the term *Meghavāhana* has sometimes been used as an epithet of Śiva. This word also stands for Indra, who rides an elephant.

Thus we find that multifaced and multiarmed Śiva appears on a considerable number of coins of the Kuṣāṇa period. It cannot be summarily accepted that all of the varieties seen on the coins could have been just the discoveries of the mint masters of the Imperial Kuṣaṇas. Existance of some models, either in stone or metals can well be anticipated. The question arises which could have been those models. The sculptors of the Mathura regions, which too was an important part of the Kuṣāṇa empire, did carve images of Śiva in more than one variety, but those could not have served as models for the mints, because there exists a wide range of differences bétween the two schools. The following points deserve notice in this connection:

(A) By and large Śiva at Mathura is pleasing to the eyes and normal in appearance. He is more Sadāśiva and Tatpuruṣa than Rudra and Aghora.

(B) Though ithyphallic, he is nowhere fully naked at Mathura, while this feature is noticible on some Kuṣāṇa coins.

(C) No attributes except the *ghaṭa* are to be seen in the hands at Mathura, on the coins the god appears with several weapons like *triśūla, vajra, gadā,* etc.

(D) Multifaced and multiarmed Śiva is uncommon at Mathura. We know of very limited sapecimens such as four armed Śiva standing in front of a *liṅga* published by Coomaraswamy[9] and four faced Śiva in the Mathura Museum (Govt. Museum, Mathura 14. 382). In the latter case, only the upper part of which is now available, three faces are in line and half figure is superimposed. In this case the face to the right is a female face. One

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more figure in the same museum (CMM. E. 12) with more than one face has tentalively been called Śiva, but it is highly worn out and badly injured.

(E) At Mathura besides the bull, Śiva sometimes been associated with a lion. On coins the bull is common, rarely it is an elephant.

It would thus be clear that Mathura figures of Śiva could not have served as models for the Imperial mint artists. Fortunately we know now five Gandhara pieces, which stand pretty near to certain types seen on the Kuṣāṇa coins. These are being described below for comparison.

(I) Figure from Saozme-kala[10]

This is four handed and three faced Śiva. The object in the normal right hand is not clear,extra right holds *triśūla,*extra left is missing and the normal left is akimbo. From the left forearm an animal hide is seen suspended. The god puts on a lower garment reaching the knees and both of his lateral faces are bearded. The body is robust and the facial features are least pleasing.

(II) A Figure in a private collection at Rome[11] (Fig. 13).

In this case, the three armed and a four faced god carries *akṣamālā, triśūla, cakra* and *kamaṇḍalu* in his hands. The central face with moustachaes is perfectly human. The third eye on the forehead is somewhat slanting not fully horizontical or vertical. The face on right is that of a lion, the corresponding one on the left is also an animal face. The god is inthyphallic and puts on a lower garment reaching the knees. His upper garment is partly preserved on the left shoulder. The palm of the righthand with *akṣamālā* is towards his own self. A small necklace is also present.

(III) Figure in the Museum fur Indische Kunst, Berlin[12] (Fig. 14):

About 18 cm in height, this is another figure of three faced four armed Śiva. The central face, which is human, is much similar to the one described above, but in this case the third eye is clearly horizontal. The right face is that of a lion, while that on left is of an antelope according to Dr. Hartal. The god holds a *triśūla* in extra right hand and a *ghaṭa* in the normal left. The other two hands are now missing. Originally these might have carried a *mālā* and *cakra*. An *upavīta* is prominently seen, but there are no plaques in it. The god is ithyphallic, though the lower garment reaching the knees is also present. The upper garment partly rolls on the left arm.

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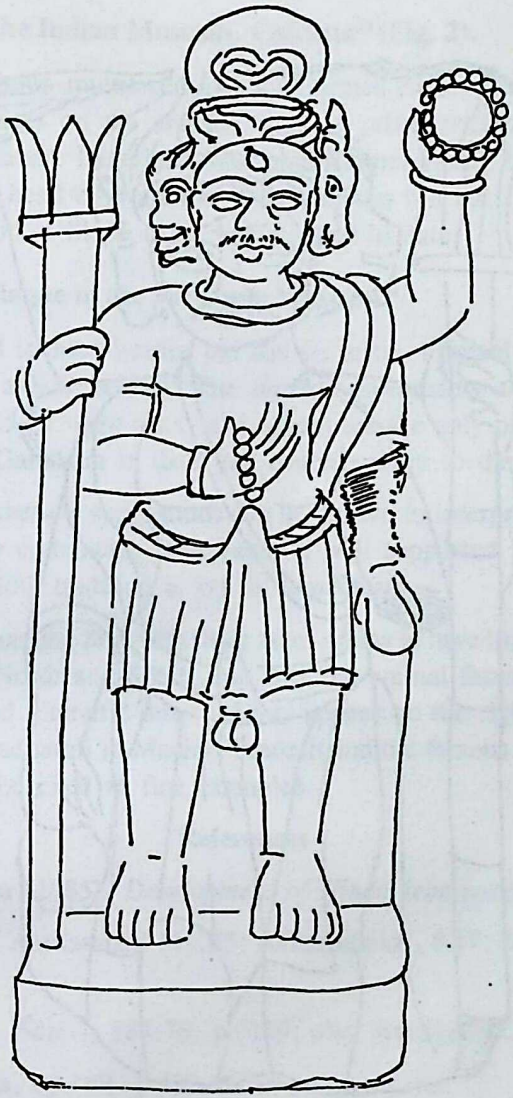

13. Siva Gandhā in a Private Collection, Rome.

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14. Museum Fur Indische Kunst, Berlin. MIK.I. 5888

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The bull in all the three cases under reference is absent.

(IV) An integlio in the Indian Museum, Calcutta[13] (Fig. 2).

This again shows multifaced and multiarmed Śiva seated on his bull. His normal right hand rests on the animal, while a *pāśa, triśūla* and *gadā* appear clockwise in other hands. Banerjea notes some flames rising from the shoulders. The halo behind the head is prominent. The bull too has been shown in a restful position. This intaglio is likely to be late Kuṣāṇa in date.

(V) Akhum Dheri Plaque in the Peshawar Museum[14]

Here the god is three headed but has six arms. Probably ithyphallic, he is seen standing with a bull behind. The *daṇḍa,* presumably that of the *triśūla, ḍamaru* - which could be *vajra* also - and *ghaṭa* are the only preserved attributes. This plaque is late Gandhāra in date, not contemporary to the Kuṣāṇa coins.

Several hypothetical suggestions can be thrown to interpret the animal faces of the god, but fully convincing interpretation well supported by literary data or any of the regional folk tradition is yet to come forth.

Fashion of depicting Śiva with three faces seems to have lingered in successive periods both in the North and South, but now the animal faces have disappeared and a female face and a terrific one (*aghora*) appear on the right and left side. A fine sculpture from Padhavali in Madhya Pradesh and the famous Elephenta Maheśa in Maharashtra can be cited as fine examples.

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2. Mahābhārata, Anuśāsans., 14. 315; Aśvamedhika., 8.17; Anuśāsana., 14.314. p.5499
3. Mahābhārata, Śānti., 284.78. p.5169; also Anuśāsana., 14.165, p.5489.
4. J.N. Banerjea, op. cit. p.118.
5. J.N. Banerjea, op. cit. pl.XI.5, p.120.
6. Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana., 140.18, p.5911
7. Liṅga., (Mor Ed. Calcutta) 21.60, p.55
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12. Ibid. Fig.4 pp.393-4 Musuem Accession No. MIK I 5888.

13. Ibid. Fig.3.

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@ Mahābhārata - Text & translation, Gita Press, Gorakhapur, 1958.

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3

INFLUENCE OF ŚAIVISM IN EPIGRAPHS, ART, ICONOGRAPHY AND ARCHITECTURE : A CASE STUDY OF THE DOIYANG-DHANSIRI VALLEY IN ASSAM

*Hemendranath Dutta**

Archaeological remains depicting Saivite art such as sculptures, Śiva *liṅgas,* temples, epigraphs and other art objects are numerous in Assam. Of these evidence a *triśūla*, the *āyudha* of Śiva, vertically engraved in the beginning of the Stone Slab Inscription found at Dubarani (Plate 1), Borpathar, Golaghat district appear to be the earliest manifestation of Saivite art so far discovered in Assam. The Dubarani Stone Slab Inscription was first discovered by Sri Phani Debnath and Sri Pratap Debnath and collected by this author in the year 1997. Prior to this discovery the stone temple door frame at Dah parvatiya in Tezpur, with the figure of Lakulisa Śiva engraved in the central part of the *lalātabimba* was believed to be one of the earliest representation of Saivite art found in Assam. Manifestations of Saivite art in temples, temple sculptures, icons, *liṅgas* and other aspects of Śiva belong to the early mediaeval period are found in galore in Assam. Comparatively, evidence of art belong to the Saivite pantheon are more in number than those found in relation to the Viṣṇu. Existence of numerous Saivite antiquities and archaeological monuments indicate the pre eminent status attainedend by Saivism as a religious cult in Assam. It would be seen that influence of Saivism was very strong and manifestations of certain Saivite art of the valley are found to be very rare in Indian art, iconogrpahy, sculpture as well as in epigraphy.

Incidently, such varied as well as rare manifestations of Saivite art are found enoromously in archaeological sites of the Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley. In this

* Exploration Officer, Director of Archaeology, Assam Guwahati - 781 001, Assam

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paper, an attempt has been made to point out certain example of Saivite art in epigraphs, sculpture, iconography and temple structure as found manifested in the Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley in Assam during early mediaeval period.

The Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley (25-26.8^{E}-93-94.5^{N}) in the State of Assam is virtually the south-westward expansion of the Brahmaputra valley being the Dhansiri a southern tributary of the Brahmaputra. The Valley is flanked by Nāga hills in the east and Mikir hills in the west. Towards the south-west of the Valley lies the mountainous district of the North Cachar Hills. Observations reveal that ethnic tribes predominently belong to the Tibeto - Burman and Mongolian racial elements were the early inhabitants of the region. The term *dibrumukhadah* as found in the Nagajorikhanikar gaon Fragmentary Stone Inscription, Sarupathar which signify to the mouth of the name of river Dibru with prefix *'Di'* meaning water or river in Bodo indicate Bodo-Kachari domination[1] in the Valley as early as c.A.D. 400. the date of this inscription. Evidence of brahmanical penetration to this region could be dated back to c.A.D. 200-300 as far as indicated by research studies on a number of individual brahmi characters found in the Valley.[2]

Sociologically, Śaivite gods are believed to have been non-aryan in origin.[3] As such discovery of Śaivite art objects, sculptures indicate development of social life having non-aryan elements under brahmanical cultural influence. Pantheon of Śaivite sculptures, *liṅgas* and *yonīpītha* in Śiva and Śakṭi form have been found to be worshipped in the brick built temples in the Valley during early mediaeval period. In the following paragraphs we shall try to show the salient features of Śaivism as reflected in epigraphs, sculpture, iconogrpahy, temple architecture and discuss a few other aspects of Śaivite art flourished in the Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley during early mediaeval period.

The earliest evidence of Śaivite art so far found in the Valley and in Assam for that matter is the Śaivite *triśūla* engraved as the auspicious symbol in the beginning of the Dubarani stone slab inscription, Borpathar, (Plate - 1). This inscription (44 x 23 x 8.8cm) was found by this author and has been tantively deciphered in Sanskrit as follows:

अक्षय दत्ति उत्त्सृष्ट श्री वसुन्धरवर्मना

A tantative meaning of the inscription as appears is that; imperishable river wharf (अक्षय) has been created (दत्ति) by Sri Vasundaravarmana (उत्सृष्ट) . The *triśūla* signify to the glorification of Śiva and indicate that Sri Vasundharavarmana who

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issued this epigraph was a Śaivite. The characters engraved (वसुनधरावर्मन) eastern *brāhmi* datable to c.A.D. 400-500 are ornamental in its style of execution and the trisula bears atleast five motifs or symbols in it. From the top these symbols are the *triśūla,* an axe, a horizontal line and a *kumbha* or an *aradhacandra,* at its bottom. A *triśūla* engraved together with these motifs is considered very rare in Indian art. These motifs or symbols are apparently associated with Śaivism. As such, the composit symbols with which the epigraph commences suggests obiviously that the issuer king Sri Vasundharavarmana was a Śaivite. Besides, of these symbols, the *Kumbha* or *ghaṭa* at bottom represents water principle the *apa*. The horizontal line above it probably signify to the earth principle called the *khiti,* the cresent moon obviously stands for the energy principle, the *teza*. These symbols together with the other two motifs i.e. the axe and the *triśūla* at the top may suggest the combination of five gross elements of creation namely; *khiti* (earth), *apa* (water), *teza* (energy), *marut* (air) and *byoma* (space) as referred to in the Indian *silpasastras*. This apart the three archs of the *triśūla* also indicate the past, present and the future. By engraving such a *triśūla* bearing the composit character of five motifs, the artist projects lord Śiva as the supreme reality on earth or in the univese, which the lord creates and as well as governs. This is the only epigraph engraved with such a *triśūla* bearing a composit character has been so far found in Assam. All these seem to signify that Śaivism as a religion enjoyed royal patronage in ancient Assam and was highly developed during c.A.D. 400-500, if not ealier.

This author excavated a brick mound at Dubarani, which exposed the foundation of a squarish brick built temple with a *pradakshināpatha* with a *mukhaliṅga* in its *garbhagṛha*. The *mukhaliṅga* (Plate 2) is datable to c.A.D. 700-800, on stylistical considerations. This brick built Śaiva temple was located within a site now identified as a brick built fortified capital surrounded by ramparts and ditches.[4] Location of this Śaivite temple within a capital site once again indicate royal patronage to Śaivism in Assam during c.A.D. 700-800.

Glorification of Śaivism by giving profound importance even by engraving inscriptions on the edges of non Saivite sculptures is an important significant in religious life prevailed in this valley. The Deopani Viṣṇu image bears a four lined inscription in eastern variety of *brāhmi* datable to c.A.D. 800. This inscription, although engraved on the figure of Viṣṇu, pays homage to *Hara*, the lord of three worlds which bears an unquestionable testimony of the spirit of syncretism[5] as well as glorification of Śaivism in early mediaeval Assam. This inscriptions is as follows:

१. हरं त्रिलोकिनम् उरगेन्द्रसूत्रं वृषध्वजं शोमजगत्प्रकाशं...

(नौमि।।) से (व्या तु देवी)

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२. भगवती तु गुह्यः । सत्या तु देवी भुवि मर्त्यलोके स्था (ण्व)

३. ङ्क-शूद्र-द्विवजवर्ण्ण-नारीसेव्या तु देवी भगवती तु गुह्यः। पि...

४. नाम मठपतिः। बगवतोः। भगवतो नारायणस्य शौली प्रतिमा भक्तानाम्॥

What appears is that, the orthodox brahmanical doctrine was relaxed in order to bring the lower order of inhabitants in to the brahmanical fold thereby ushering in an era of religious catholicity and tolerance in society.[6] The term *bhakta* or devotee found in the Deopani Viṣṇu image inscription as above is of great significance in this context. Because the term *bhakta* signify to any devotee who adhere to brahmanical cult, irrespective of his caste or creed. This inscription records a proclamation that the godess (Devī) who in association with Śiva is worshippable for the Śudras, the twice born classes and women.[7] This make it clear that non-aryan inhabitants of lower strata were encouraged to follow Hinduism through liberalised sanskritised doctrine with objectives of organising strong regional society in the valley.

Art of another inscribed stone Harihara sculpture found at Deopani is very remarkale in this regard (plate 3). This image containing three lines of writing on its back is a *caturbhuja* figure depicted in *samapāda sthānaka* posture. The composit character of this figure as Hari Hara being Hara (Śiva) in the left and Hari (Viṣ ṇu) in the right part is clearly depicted iconographically. *Āyudhas* in hands, a *yajñopavita, kuṇḍalas* are shown. But in treatment this sculpture betray the finer elements of Indian art and gives more emphasis on naive tribal physiognomy. This factor is apprent in squarish treatment of art of this sculpture which is rare. Some schalars try to justify the art of this sculpture as similar to wood carving.[8] But in fact, the art of this sculpture is more nearer to tribal art akin to the native ethnic texture. Attempt has also been made to identify this form of art as the Deopani art[9] which could more justifiably be given a nomenclature of the Dubarani school of regional art, on the basis of the place of its origin at Dubarani, the capital of the regional kingdom flourished in this valley.[10]

Incidently, a *caturbhuja* figure of Harihara in *samapāda sthānka* posture is found at Borpathar (Plate 4). Stylistically as well as iconographically, this sculpture appears only to be a figure of Viṣṇu except that a *japaṃālā* is found provided in the right lower arm of this figure. *Japamālā* as we know, is an *āyudha* of Śiva and atleast the prominent twenty four *rupas* of Viṣṇu have no *japamālā* provided as an *āyudha*. Providing of a *japamālā* as an *āyudha* to this figure of Viṣṇu may indicate three factors as follows:

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First, emphasis might have been given to depict the single figure of Viṣṇu in composit character with Śiva. Secondly, this art form seem to indicate glorification of Śiva above Viṣṇu. Thirdly, this figure might have also depicted Viṣṇu as *Yogī-nārāyana,* providing meditative Saivite art in its expression. Another similar figure of Viṣṇu with a *japamālā* in the right lower arm is found at Dergaon.

A *caturbhuja* Harihara figure seated in *dhyānāsana*, holding a *padma* and a *vilva* respectvely by the left and the right lower arms (Plate 5) from Rajapukhuri Sarupathar, a figure of *Lakulisa Śiva* seated in *mahārājalilāsana,* two figures of Dakshas, and *sapta matṛkā* figures, a *Śiva liṅga*, the *sirovarttana* of which represents the human phallus (Plate 6) from Borpathar, and a figure of Umā Maheśvara are the other forms of Saivite art of this period found in the Valley.

CONCLUSION

Evidence of Śaivite art found in the Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley of Assam as discussed clearly indicate the prevelence of strong Śaivite influence in the early mediaeval society in Assam. The Parvatiya Cooperplate Grants records worshipping of Śiva by the Kamarupa kings. The iconographical as well as epigraphical evidence, substantiates the glorification of Saivism as a religious cult prevelent in Assam. Such cultural feature as found reflected in art and archaeology of the Doiyang-Dhansiri Valley may also indicate the development of regional *silpasastras* on the basis of which these sculptures were carved and the text of the epigraphs were composed. Engraving of a *triśūla* in the beginning of the Dubarani Stone Slab Inscription of Sri Vasundharavarmana; the exposition of a squarish brick built temple plinth with a *mukhaliṅga* in its *garbhagṛha* indicate that Saivism not only was a royal religion but also was popular in all section of society. It must have been the result of royal patronisation of the cult. The epigraphs have as such been found carved on the body of the Saivite figures or otherwise, if it was a figure of Viṣṇu, the inscription bearing on its body as discussed was engraved to glorify Śaivism. Such strong influence of Śaivism is manifested in the Saivite art, sculpture, iconography and epigraphs found in the valley. It is not imporobable that certain ritual on Saivism were developed in the valley because the Deopani Harihara Stone Image Inscription (supra) records singing of *nama-kirttana* performed before consecretion of images in temples in the Valley. As such, it is probable that, since the inhabitants of the Valley were ethnically tribal in origin, Śaivism was glorified or patronised by the kings in the Valley for securing social solidarity with political objectives of organising a regional kingdom in the valley. This was emphasised as far as supported by the Dubarani Stone Slab Inscription, at a period, contemporary to the other two ancient kingdoms of Kamarupa and Daḅaka found mentioned in

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the Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription of the imperial Gupta Emperor, Samudra Gupta.

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4

NAṬARĀJA IMAGES FROM ASSAM

*N.C. Das**

Amongst the greatest of the names of Śiva is Naṭarāja, Lord of Dancers, or King of Actors. The dance of Naṭarāja is Nadanta. Coomaraswamy interpretes that the place of the Dance, Chidāmbaram, the Centre of the Universe, is within the heart.[1]

The worship of Śiva in his numerous forms has a great antiquity in the Brahmaputra Valley. The evidence is provided by literature and archaeology. Fifteen centres of the faith are mentioned in *Kālikā Purāṇa*. It is also mentioned in the same treatise that before the introduction of Devī worship in Kāmākhyā by king Naraka, Śiva was the guardian deity of the land. According to the *Skanda Purāṇa*, king Jalpeshwara for the first time propagated the worship of Śiva in Assam. It is mentioned in the inscriptions that king Bhagadatta who belongs to the *Māhābhārata* period was a worshipper of Śiva. *Harshacarita* says that Kumār Bhāskarvarman was a devotee of Śiva.[2]

From the 4th century to the 12th century A.D. i.e., during the rule of Varman, Shālastambha and Pāl dynasties in Assam supremacy of Śaivism was established in this land. During the reign of the Āhoms (1228-1838 A.D.) the worship of Śiva was popular among the people. Throughout the land many temples dedicated to Śiva were got built by the Āhom kings.

The most ancient name of Assam was Prāgjyotisha. Bhagadatta is mentioned in the *Māhābhārata* as the king of Prāgjyotisha. When Tantricism intruded to this region, the name Prāgjyotisha changed into Kāmarūpa. Bhāskarvarman, who was contemporary Northern Indian king Harshavardhana, was a king of Kāmarūpa. With the advent of the Āhoms, Kāmarūpa came to be known as Asom and later on the Britishers made it Assam.

* Lecturer, Kaliabor College, Assam

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Extensive ruins of Śiva temples and icons of the deity are found throughout the state. As early as the 5th century A.D. Śiva was worshipped by His iconographic representations in temples and the faith was popular among all classes of people.[3] In comparison to Śiva Liṅgas and temples, images of Śiva are not abundant in Assam. The sculptures of Śiva are found in different postures - *Sthānaka, Āsana and Nritya,* and manifestations - Lākuliśa, Umā-Maheśvara, Naṭarāja, Maheśa, Harihara, Ardhanāriśvara, Bhairava, Aghora, Gajāsura-Saṁhāra, etc.

So far only seven Naṭarāja images have been found in Assam - three in Guwahati, two at Madan-Kāmdev (near Guwahati), one on the wall of the Kāmākhyā temple and one at Bāmuni hills of Tezpur. Among them the Naṭarāja sculpture recovered from Āmbāri excavation, (Plate 7) is the biggest and most noteworthy. It belongs to the 13th - 14th century A.D. The image is 256 cm in height and 203 cm in width. It is carved in grey sandstone. The statue is ten-armed. Attributes of the right hands of it from top are *khaḍga, agni or Śakti, daṇḍa* and *triśūla.* The lowermost right hand is pointing below. Attributes of the left hands from top are *Kheṭaka, Kapāla or pātra, nāga* and *khaṭvāṅga.* The lowermost left hand is in *Varada mudrā* and holding one small *akṣamālā* (rosary). One *Sarpa* (snake) lies on the whole torso of the statue from the neck to the waist below. The Naṭarāja wears a decorated *mukuṭa* and two big roundish *kuṇḍala* (ear rings). He has three eyes - one is on the forehead. The tip of his right leg is on Nandi. The left leg is lifted up and bent horizontally on the knee. To the right side of Nandi an emaciated figure is dancing. His right hand holds a *ghaṇṭā* (bell) to keep time in dance. One *pātra* (pot) is hanging from the same arm. Attribute of the left hand is indistinct. His left leg is lifted up like that of his master. To the left side of Nandi is a dwarfish figure. He is holding a *ghaṇṭā* in his right hand. One pot is tied to the same arm. One *triśūla* is in his left hand. One *Kirṭimukha* finial is on top of the stele. The Naṭarāja wears ornaments on wrists, arms and legs, and a beautifully decorated waist-band. His *Kaṭibastra* with floral designs does not touch the knees. His downcast opened eyes evince anger which leads to *Saṁhāra* (destruction). Another aspect of Naṭarāja, *anugraha* (grace), is seen in his pleasing smile. This Naṭarāja image can be regarded as one of the best specimens of Assamese sculpture. This is at present preserved in the Assam State Museum, Guwahati.

Another Naṭarāja image which was recovered in Guwahati (Plate 8) from the bank of the Brahmaputra belongs to the 10th-11th century A.D. This statue is carved in a circular medallion, top right corner of which is broken. According to the *Maṭsyapurāṇa,* which is followed in Eastern India, this Naṭarāja is ten-armed.[4] His left leg is on Nandi. The head of Nandi turns upwards to watch his master dancing. *Triśūla, khaṭvāṅga, dhanuṣa, khaḍga, kheṭaka, nāga* and *pāśa* are the attributes seen in the hands of the sculpture. Lowermost two hands are broken. The face of the figure is also broken. In dancing speed, his *ttariya* is flowing in the air.

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The right leg is lifted up and bent on the knee. Headress of the figure seems to be decorated. The image is 99 cm in height and 106 cm in width.

The Naṭarāja image which was recovered from Urbashi (Guwahati) is of 9th-10th century A.D. The ten-armed icon is in relief - carved on an architectural part which was perhaps the lintel of a door-frame. Attributes of the hands are not distinct. Expression of the face is not clear. The lowermost left hand is on his chest. It seems to be in *Varada mudrā*.

Two Naṭarāja images recovered from Madan-Kāmdev ruins belonging to the 11th-12th century A.D. have been preserved at the site museum. The bigger one (Plate 9) measures 106 cm in height and 54 cm in width. The upper right hand of the four-handed image is broken and the attribute is indistinct. The upper left hand is holding an aṅkuśa. A *Damaru* is in the lower right hand. Attribute of the lower left hand is not clear. Nandi below the right leg is a tiny figure. The Naṭ arāja wears a waist-band made of *naramuṇḍa* (human-skull). Some ornaments are clear on his wrists and arms. He wears a *Jaṭāmukuṭa*. Probably the tail of a snake is flowing to his legs in his frenzied dance. He is not dancing on Nandi; Nandi is beside him (to the right side). The eyes of the figure are fully opened. His lips are betraying a smile; perhaps a smile of rage and grace. The nose is broken. The image is carved in granite stone.

The other Naṭarāja image from Madan-Kāmdev (Plate 10) is 71 cm in height. It is remarkable as it is dancing on a raised pedestal, not on Nandi or *Apasmārapurusha*. The statue is four-handed. The upper right hand is holding a *damaru*. The palm of the hand is broken. The broken upper left hand is perhaps holding an *aṅkuśa*. The lower right is on his chest, seems to be in *Varada mudrā*. The attribute of the lower left hand is not clear at all. The image is dancing on the tip of his right leg. The left leg lifted up is broken from the knee to the toe. The Naṭarāja wears a *jatāmukuṭa,* same like that of the other figure from Madan-Kāmdev mentioned above. It is noteworthy that one *chhatra* (?) is on his *mukuṭa*. It is same like the raised pedestal of the figure. The Naṭarāja wears some ornaments on his wrists, arms and neck, and a waist-band. One band of cloth or the tail of a snake coming from above lies on his right leg and touches his left leg. This image is also carved in granite stone.

On the wall of the Kāmākhyā temple, there is a carving of four-armed dancing Śiva. The image measures 120 cm in height and 59 cm in width. Though the face of the figure is almost broken but still very noteworthy as it combines the concepts of Vīṇādhara and Naṭarāja in one.[5] The dancer is playing the Vīṇa and to keep time, there are jingling bells waist. He wears a large garland running almost

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the whole length of his body. A dwarf, almost like the Apasmārapurusha in south Indian sculpture, is under the feet of the dancer. This is very uncommon in Assam. The *Jaṭās,* flowing only towards the right, suggest his *ardhanārisvara rūpa.* His one pair of arms carries the *Vīṇā.* Attributes of the other two hands are not very clear.

Another Naṭarāja sculpture is found amid the temple ruins of Bāmuni hills, Tezpur. This statue belongs to the 8th-9th century A.D. Most of the limbs of it are broken, because of the bad state of preservation and human vandalism.

A striking similarity can be observed between the Naṭarāja sculptures of Assam and that of West Bengal and Bangladesh.[6] Naṭarāja images of Assam are likely the products of the cultural influence coming from Bengal. During the Pāla period (990-1140 A.D.) of Assamese history Kāmarūpa was influenced culturally by Bengal. This was the mature period of sculptural art in Assam.

Assam cannot boast of developing its own art style during the early medieval period. Assamese art scene of that period was dominated by East Indian art style.[7] The sculptural art of other parts of India-north India as well as south India - influenced the art of Assam in some way or other. The local traits might also have exerted influence over the art styles imported to Assam. Later on, after the Pāla period, art of sculpture in Assam was vigorously influenced by local traits. Then onwards deterioration started in Assamese art. Tribal and traditional elements are prominently visible in the late medieval art of Assam. Aesthetically the late medieval sculptures are rather crude than graceful. Then art activity was sporadic; patronage of art was not encouraging. So a well defined art style did not evolve in Assam during the late medieval period.

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5

EARLY ŚAIVA SECTS AND TEMPLE ART & ARCHITECTURE OF TAMIL COUNTRY

*T. Satyamurthy**

The Śaiva Sidhāntha of Tamil Country of today is an all embracing system, encompassing temple worship, chanting Vedas, performing rituals according to Śaivāgamas, and reciting Tevaram the Tamil hymns. The system in the past could compromise with all other alien thoughts that considered Śiva as the supreme being. The conception of Śiva as '*Paśupati*' (the Lord of all living beings) found a popular appeal in the post Sangam period and it paved the way for amalgamation of many existing systems into one and in that process a unified Saivism was achieved. It accommodated many other earlier such schools and also kept the Vedic religion as a revered and sacred one. The influence of this had a great impact on the temple art and architecture of the Tamil Country.

If one attempts to retrace the Śiva concept of Sangam Age[1] (earlier to 2nd century A.D), he is not found among the Gods or Goddess of the physiographic divisions of land of the country.[2] He is accepted as the Ardhanarisvara and divinity of great reverence and described as the primary force with long jatā and revealed the *Śaivāgamas* which are not alien to four *vedas* and six *angas*.[3] The non-vedic hetrox schools of thoughts were also condemned in these texts.

However, the practice of worship of Śiva as directed by Śaivāgamas may be different from mere theistic vedic sacrifices.[4] Various passages in the Sangam literature indicate this practice and equal importance was given to the vedic sacrifices also. The Sangam Age Pandya kings had many titles associated with performance of *yajñas*[5] and the Pandya kingdom had two distinctions viz. (1) they used elephants instead of bullocks to thrash grain (proof of plentiful yield in the kingdom) and in the Pandya capital the dawn broke with the vedic chanting. Again Karikala Chola

* Superintending Archaeologist, A.S.I., Thrissur Circle, Thopinmoola, Thrissur-680618

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of Sangam Age is attributed as *Kāla* (death) to those who do not adhere to the part of the *vedas* and *śāstras*.[6] Many other schools of thought like Brāhma, Vaiṣṇava, Ājeevaka are also mentioned there but the vedic sacrifices as a parallel way of worship to Śaivāgama worship is mainly echoed in them.

The above systems continued independently atleast till the beginning of the 7th century A.D. This is authenticated by Sekilar (2th century A.D.) in his hagiology of 63 Śaiva saints (Periyapuranam). Thirujnana Sambandar (Sambandar) the preceptor of Śaiva cult of the Tamil Country started the rejuvenation process and on one hand got unified all the Śaiva sects like *Pāśupata, Kālamukha, Kāpālika, Lakuliśa* and bridged it with vedic traditions.

It is essential here to know from the Pèriyapuranam the back drop of the silent drama that was enacted at Brahmapuram, (Silkali, District Nagai, Tamilnadu) during 7th century A.D. Having born to Sivapada Hrudayar and Bhagavathy of Kaundanya gotra of Smārtha Brahmin tradition, at the age of three, he accompanied his father for the morning bath in the temple tank (pond). Sivapadahrudayar left the child on the banks of the pond and dipped inside chanting *Aghamarshana Suktha* as per Smārtha (Brahmin) tradition. Having not seen the father, Sambandar started weeping facing the temple of Thoniyappar (Śiva).

Śiva graced the child by directing Pārvathī to feed the child with milk of wisdom (*Śivajñānam*). After emerging from the pond, Sivapadahrudayar chided the child for committing *anācāra* by drinking the milk of some unknown person. There upon, Sambandar with *Sivajñāna* disclosed the real pleasure of the divine bliss of Śiva and started describing Śiva in iconic form in poems of par excellence. Sivapadahrudayar accepted Śaivāgama worship in the temple and himself lead the child Sambandar to as much as two hundred Śaiva centres in India (mostly in South) and glorified Śiva and Śaivasiddhānta in four thousand five hundred stanzas. While affirming Śiva as the Lord of the Universe, he regarded anyone opposed to vedic tradition as a *nāstika*. It was not devotion to the Lord Śiva that necessarily made one to be Śaivite but one should equally respect vidic tradition[7]. He equally supported the vedic rituals by contributing to the Yajñas conducted by his father. He was proud to herald himself as a Tamil Sambandar of vedic tradition. Besides bridging the gap between the vedic tradition and Āgama tradition, he unified various Śaivasiddhānta sects who accepted Śiva as a Supreme. The Lakuliśa cult of Western India (*Kayavarohan*) found its way deep in Chola mandalam at Nagapattinam (Nagaikarnam), Kālamukhas (Kudamukku, Kumbakonam, Kadavur Mayanam) Kāpālikas (kapaliśvara at Thirumayilai). Sambandar visited all such sectarian places and glorified Śiva as common 'God' for all and even invariably

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uttered everywhere that He is embodiment of all *vedas* and He is the same Śiva of puranic theme. This theme is exclusively included in the 8th and 9th stanzas of his *Padigams* (poems). Thus, he could profound a unified Śaivasiddhānta of various sects and bridged the seemingly gap (if not in a higher metaphysical level) in between them.

In the above endeavour, he was encouraged and assisted by Thirunavukkarasar (hereafter Appar) of Thondaimandalam. Appar, a contemporary of Mahendra Varman, a Pallava ruler, (668 - 677 A.D.) was a Śaivite by faith, but became a Jaina monk and obtained the title of Dhanasena from the north Indian centres of Jainism. After his return from the north, he reverted back to Saivism and converted the Pallava King as a Śaiva. While Sambandar concentrated the spread of the Śaiva cause in far south in Pandya country, Appar spread Śaivasiddhānta in Thondaimandalam. The impact of their services were felt in many corners of South India and Ādiśankara, the profounder of *Advaita* regarded the events as the grace of Pārvathī and mentioned Sambandar as *Dravidasisu*[8].

Thus, this silent revolution enacted during the 7th century A.D. ended with the acceptance of a unified Saivism by all Śaiva sects and vedic Smārthas. In the process all other non-vedic thoughts of Tamil Country were expelled and vedic rituals found a place in Āgama systems and vice versa. Chidambaram, the centre of vedic religion became a nerve centre of Saivism[9].

The above factors had a direct effect on the temple art and architecture of Tamil Country. Many Gods of vedic pantheons were given predominant place in temple sculptures. In the early Pallava rock cut temples, in *Adi Tala* and other *Talas,* many forms of Śiva are found depicted (as found in *Dharma Ratham* at Mamallapuram). In the Arjuna Ratha, we find Indra on the East, Śiva in the South and Viṣṇu in the North as *koshta* images occupying the central place of the wall, but in the structural phase; the Mukunda Nayanar temple at Mamallapuram have the figures of Indra on the east, Dakshinamurthy on the south, Narasimha in the east and Brahmā in the north in the superstructure. All these reliefs are shown in the *Gala* part of the *śikhara.* This tradition of having *devakoshtha* or *gala devatās* had certainly some ritual and functional validity in the temples[10]. Two important deities of vedic rituals Indra and Brahmā got elevated in the Śaiva tradition and invariably this was followed in Pallava country, especially in Thondaimandalam as found at Virāteśwara temple, Thirutani, Śiva temple, Takkolam etc. This influence was felt in Cholaimandalam also upto pre-Aditya times as in Tillaisthanam, Tirukattalai, Niyamam etc. Śilpa texts are not very clear about the disposition of such *koshtha* and *gala devatās.* Neither the *sikharas* of their counter parts in other

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adjoining areas or north Indian *sikharas* give such a predominant place to Indra and Brahmā. However, during Imperial Chola period, in the eastern side of the *sikhara,* Indra was replaced by Śiva as noticed at Bṛhadiśvara temple, Thanjavur etc., but Brahmā was retained in the Northern side throughout even upto the Vijayanagara and Nayaka period. Similarly, in Pandyamandalam, this scheme was adopted (Thiruvalisvaram) **(Plate 11)** In the Chera country, the above tradition is found in earliest available archaeological remains both in stone and wood. Irrespective of sectarian affiliation, the above scheme continued in the Kerala temples till 19th century A.D. **(Plate 12)**

In the iconographic aspect, Śiva of early Pallava period holds either serpent or *triśūla* (Mamallapuram rock cut temples). As Śiva's iconic form was probably reformed in vedic schools in late Pallava period, he is found with the vedic *agni* in one of his hands. Especially, in the depiction of Śiva as Nṛttamurti, he is depicted with *agni* in one of his hands and this tradition is restricted exclusively within the Tamil country. The depiction of *Agni* as one of his attributes could have started from Chidambaram, where the vedic Brahmins (Thillaival Andanars) accepted the iconic worship of Śiva and then surrendered the vedic fire to him to indicate that Śiva is embodiment of everything including vedic fire. Their acceptance of Śaivasidhānta had geared the artists to innovate such attributes to Śiva.

The earliest such representation is from the Pallava rock cut temple at Siyamangalam wherein Nṛtta Śiva is depicted with *agni* in the right upper hand **(Plate 13)** In the early Pallava bronze of Natarāja from Kuram, *agni* is conspicuously absent but finds its place in upper left hand in later 9th century A.D at Vellur **(Plate 14 & 15)**. It is very significant that fire as its attribute is completely absent in the area north of Krishna river. This tradition continued in Chola, Pandya, Chera bronzes, paintings, wood carvings till the end of 19th century A.D.

It is clear from the above that the unified Saivism of the Tamil Samayacharyas had a definite implication on temple art and architecture of Tamil Country. They reflect unparallel elements in the art history of the Zone.

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6

ARDHANĀRĪŚVARA-MŪRTI IN THE TEMPLE ART OF ANDHRA PRADESH: A COMPARATIVE ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDY (Early Chālukya to Vijayanagara)

*P.N. Naidu**

The hermaphrodite or the Ardhanārīśvara form of Siva is a unique conception of Hindu creative mind. On the phĭlosophic side, the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva represents the "two fundamentally opposite cosmic forces named *prakriti* and *purusa* which are constantly drawn together to embrace and fuse with each other but separate by an intervening axis.[1] In other words, the active and passive forces have been personified in the composite image of Ardhanārīśvara bringing about the fact that one is complementary to the other in the cosmic evolution. The mythological background of this form of Śiva is found in many Purāṇas. It is stated that one day Gaurī (Pārvatī) form was reflected in the crystal-like breast of Śiva. Gaurī mistook the reflection to be that of another and more favoured woman and a conjugal rupture ensued. But after some time, when amiable relations were restored, the Goddess expressed a desire to be so united with her lord as to leave no possibility of the recurrence of a feeling of separation. Thus, the divine couple allowed their bodies to be half-fused into each other and as a result was created the united Ardhanārīśvara[2] which gives an impression to the people the idea of single entity of Śiva and Śakti or *Purusa* and *Prakriti*. T.A. Gopinatha Rao relates another story about hte origin of Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva. Once the *devas* and *rishis* were circumambulating Śiva and Pārvatī at Kailāśa. Bhringi being an exclusive worshipper of Śiva, started circumambulating the god of his own choice, neglecting to go round

* Associate Professor & Head, Dept. of AIHC & Archaeology, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati - 517 502, A.P.

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or pay homage to the Goddess. Pārvatī grew angry for this act of Bhringi and accordingly she reduced the sage to a skin covered skeleton. Bhringi then was unable to stand on his two skinny legs. But Śiva took pity on him and provided him with a third leg and also at the same time to save the honour of Pārvatī, the God united his body with her, in order that Bhringi would be compelled to pay homage to the Goddess, while paying respects to Him. Thus orginated the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva.[3]

R.C. Agrawala states that the earliest so for know, depiction of the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva in the plastic art of India is to be found in Kushāṇa reliefs from the Mathura region.[4] But many sculptures illustrating Ardhanārīśvara have been found throughout the length and breadth of India.[5] But in all these sculptures, the deity is shown either standing alone or by the side of his mount Nandi. M.L. Nigam is of the opinion that the figure of Ardhanārīśvara was evolved during the Vishṇukuṇḍin period.[6]

The description of the Ardhanārīśvara-mūrti is given in the *Aṁśumadbhēdāgama, Kāmikāgama, Suprabhedāgama, Śilparatna, Karaṇāgama, Matsyapurāṇa and Mānasollāsa.* The image of this form should be half man and half woman. The right half is male and the left half female. The image may have two, three or four arms. The contents and poses of the right hands should be of the following combinations: *Paraśu and abhaya; varada and śūla; ṭaṅka and abhaya; śūla and akṣamāla;* or one of the arms may be some what bent and rested upon the head of the bull and the other hand held in *abhaya.* If there are only two hands, the right one should be in *varada* pose or there may be a *kapāla* held by it. The whole of right side should be adorned with the ornaments peculiar to Śiva and the chest on the right side should be that of a man. On the right side, the garment should cover the body below the lions only up to the knee and the material of the government is tigers skin and silk. On the right half of the chest, there should be **nāga-yajñōpavīta** and on the lions of the same side, the ***sarpa-mekhalā*** or girdle of snake. There should be a ***jaṭāmakuṭa*** on the head with the crescent moon. In the right ear, there should be **makarakuṇḍala, sarpakuṇḍala** or an ordinary **kuṇḍala** and the right half of the forehead should have one half of an eye. If the image of Ardhranārīśvara has four arms, of the two left ones, one is to be rested on the head of the bull and the other kept in ***kaṭaka hasta*** holding a **nīlotpala** in it or the latter may be let down hanging below. If there be only three arms, there should be only one on the left side. This hand may keep in it either a flower, a mirror or a parrot and it must be adorned with ***kēyūra, kaṅkaṇa*** and other ornaments. If on the other hand there are only two arms, the left one may be hanging below or keeping in it a mirror, a parrot or a flower or it may be resting

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on the head of the bull. On the left side, there should be the bosom of a woman with a round well developed breast. On the head of the female half, there should be ***karaṇḍamakuṭa*** or a fine knot of hair well -combed and divided or both. On the forehead of this half, a half ***tilaka*** mark, contiguous with the half eye of Śiva should be shown. The left eye should be painted with collyrium.[7]

In Andhra Pradesh, beautiful representations of Ardhanārīśvara-mūrti ranging from 6th to 16th century are found in the Early Chālukya (6th - 8th century A.D.), Eastern Chālukya (7th - 11th Century A.D.), Eastern Gaṅga (9th - 11th century A.D.), Western Chālkya (973 - 1198 A.D.), Telugu Chola (12th - 14th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara temples (14th - 17th century A.D.) The iconographic features and peculiarities of sixteen images of Ardhanārīśvara found in different places of Andhra Pradesh are given in the sequel.

i) Ardhanārīśvara in the Early Chālukya Art:

The Early Chālukya representations of Ardhanārīśvara are found at Yēllēsvaram, Dēvarakoṇḍa taluk, Nalgoṇḍa district, Saṅgamēśvara temple at Kunḍavalli and Bālabrahma temple at Ālampūr in Mahabūbnagar district.

1. A miniature of model shrine which was acquired from Yēllēśvarama and presently placed in the compound of the State Archaeology Department at Hyderabad, is carved with *Ardhanārīśvara* in the niche. The figure is carved in *tribhaṅga* pose with four hands carrying a snake in the upper right, *triśūla* in the lower right and a bud in the upper left hands. The lower left is resting on the hip. A full round breast is carved on the left, suggesting the feminine aspect of the God.[8] In this sculpture, *nāga* in the upper right, *triśūla* in the lower right and the position of the lower left arm differ from the texts.

2. The second early Chālukya representation of *Ardhanārīśvara* is found on the front wall of the *aṅtarāla* of the Bālabrahma temple at Ālaṁpūr. Standing in *dvibhaṅga,* the deity holds *nāga* in the upper right hand, flower in the upper left and *triśūla* in the lower right and keeps the lower left hand hanging. He is adorned with a pendant on the right ear and *cakrakuṇḍala* on the left ear, *hāra* and a broad band going round the left shoulder. There is a single breast on the left side of the chest.[9] This image resembles in all respects the figure of Yēllēśvaram described above. *Nāga* in the upper right and *triśūla* in the lower right arm differ from the descriptions of the texts.

3. The third representation of *Ārdhanārīśvara* of the Early Chālukya period is found in the Saṅgamēśvara temple of Kūḍavalli. The deity stands in *tribhaṅga* and has four hands. The upper right and upper left hands hold *triśūla* and flower

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respectively. The lower right is resting on the head of hte bull, while the lower left hand is hanging. This image is in the typical Bādāmi Chālukyan idiom. The bull which is sculptured as licking the leg of the God affectionately lends naturalness to the sculpture[10]. In this example, the positions of hte lower hands differ from the texts.

ii) Ardhanarisvara in the Eastern Chālukya Art:

The Eastern Chālukya examples of Ardhanārīśvara are found in the temples at Biccavōlu and Pālakollu.

1. The Gōliṅgēśvara temple of Biccavōlu of the period of the Eastern Chālukya king Gunaga Vijayāditya (848-89) contains on its east wall the four armed sculpture of *Ardhanārīśvara*. Standing with the right leg slightly bent, this deity holds *triśūla* in the upper right hand, *khaṭvaṅga* in the upper left, *kapāla* in the lower right and the lower left in *kaṭi hasta*. The right foot rests on a bull, the vehicle of Śiva and the left foot on a lion[11], the mount of the Goddess. In this example, *khaṭvaṅga* in the upper left and the lower left at *kaṭi* differ from the texts.

2. Another image of Ardhanārīśvara of the Eastern Chālukya art is found on a pillar in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Rāmalingēśvara temple at Pālakollu. Here, the image is represented as seated in *vīrāsana,* with one breast on the left side. The deity has four hands and holds *paraśu* in the upper right hand, *utpala* in the upper left and keeps the lower two hands in *abhaya* and *varada* poses[12]. The hand position of the lower left hand of this image differs from the requirements of the texts.

iii) Ardhanārīśvara in the Eastern Gaṅga Art:

The Eastern Gaṅga representations of *Ardhanārīśvara* are found in the Madhukēśvara and Sōmēśwara temples at Mukhalingam. The Madhukēsvara temple was built in the reign of Ananatavarma Vajrahasta who ruled from 850 to 876 A.D. The Sōmēśvara temple was built during the reign of Anantavarma Vajrahasta V (1037-1070).[13]

1. The central rectangular projection on the lintel of a niche on the south wall of the Sōmēśvara temple at Mukhaliṅgam, contains the four armed image of Ardhanārīśvara. The deity stands in *tribhaṅga* and holds a curved object in the upper right hand, *utpala* in the upper left, a round object in the lower right and a whip in the lower left hand. He is decorated with *mukuṭa, makarakuṇḍala* on the right ear and *cakrakuṇḍala* on the left ear, *graivēyakas, yajñōpavīta* of beads, girdle with hangings and *mañjiras*. The left breast is finely ornamented. There is a Nandi to bottom right and *kalaśa* to bottom left.[14] Lion, the mount of Śakti is conspicuous

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by its absence.

2. The Sōmēśvara temple of Mukhaliṅgam contains in the niche on its east wall yet another four armed imge of Ardhanārīśvara. Standing in *tribhaṅga*, this deity holds *triśūla* in the upper right hand, flower in the upper left, *darpaṇa* (mirror) in the lower left and keeps the lower right in *varada*. The right half represents Śiva and the left half Pārvatī. There is a single breast on the left side and Nandi to bottom right and lion to bottom left, the mount of Śiva and Pārvatī respectively. This deity is adorned with *yajñōpavīta* of pearls, broad girdle and *mañjīra* on the left foot.[15]

3. The nich on the right, on the south wall of the *jagamohana* of the Madhukēśvara temple of Mukhaliṅgam contains a four armed image of Ardhanārīśvara. Standing in *dvibhaṅga,* this deity holds *akṣmāla* in the upper right hand and *darpaṇa* in the upper left, a round object in the lower right and keeps the lower left at *kaṭi*. He is adorned with *jaṭāmukuṭa* on the right side and *kirīṭ amukuṭa* on the left side. There is a single beast on the left side. There are a man and nandi to bottom right and a man to bottom left. The right and left halves represent *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* respectively. From top to the feet, the two halves are clearly demarcated. Even in the context of head dress, one can notice a difference between the two halves. The one on the left being that of a female, while the other on the right that right that of a male.[16] The images of Ardhanārīśvara in the Eastern Gaṅga art are in accordance with the description of Śilparatna and other Āgama texts.

iv. Ardhanārīśvara in the Western Chālukya Art:

1. The Paccala Sōmēśvara temple at Pānagal of the Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi (973 - 1198 A.D.) contains in its western wall an image of four armed Ardhanārīśvara. The deity is seated on a lotus in *vīrāsana* and holds *nāga* in the upper right arm, flower in the upper left and keeps the lower right in *abhaya* and the lower left is broken. He is adorned with *kirīṭa* with pearl hangings, *makara* and *cakrakuṇḍalas, kēyūras, graivēyaka, yajñōpavīta* and *ardhoruka*. There is a single breast on the left. At the bottom, to the right is a seated bull.[17] *Nāga* in the upper right hand of this image is not mentioned in the texts.

v. Ardhanārīśvara in the Telugu Cōla Art:

1. The pillars of the *dvāramaṇḍapa* of the Manumaśiddhēśvara temple at Krishnapaṭnam of the Telugu Cōlas contain two interesting sculptures of Ardhanārīśvara. These sculptures are datable to the early half of the 13th century A.D. In the first sculpture, Ardhanārīśvara is seated on a *pīṭha* in *vīrāsana* and has

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four hands. The upper right hand holds *triśūla* and the lower right in *abhaya*. The upper left is holding a *nīlōtpala* and the lower left is hanging down. The head is adorned with *kirīṭamakuṭa*. The right ear is adorned with *makarakuṇḍala*, while the left ear is having kuṇḍala. He wears *graivēyakas, channavīra* and *pūrnōruka*. Nandi is carved at the bottom of the *pīṭha*.[18]

2. In the second sculpture also, Ardhanārīśvara is seated on a *pīṭha* in *vīrāsana* but has eight hands. The deity holds *triśūla, nīlōtpala* etc., in the upper hands and keeps the lower right in *abhaya* and the lower left in *varada*. The head is adorned with *kirīṭamakuṭa*.[19] An interesting iconographic feature of this sculpture is that the right half is female and the left half is male. This sculpture with eight hands is also a rare example.

In the first sculpture, the contents in the upper hands and the positions of the lower arms conform to the requirements of the Āgama texts. The second sculpture which is eight handed variety is not described by the texts and this may be a new variety of Ardhanārīśvara.

vi. Ardhanārīśvara in the Vijayanagara Art:

The good examples of Vijayanagara representations of Ardhanārīśvara are found at Śrīsailam, Tāḍipatri etc.

1. The south *prākāra* wall of the Mallikārjuna temple of Śrīsailam contains a sculpture of four armed Ardhanārīśvara. The deity on a *pīṭha* in *vīrāsana* and holds *triśūla* in the upper right and *nīlōtpala* in the upper left. The lower right is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *varada* which differes from the texts. The head is adorned with *kirīṭamukuṭa* and we do not notice *karaṇḍamukuṭa* or a fine lock of hair well combed and divided or both on the left half of the head, so characteristic of *Pārvatī*. There is a *makarakuṇḍala* on the right ear and *cakrakuṇḍala* on the left. He wears a *pūrnoruka*. There is a single breast on the left side. An interesting iconographic feature is that to the left of Ardhanārīśvara are the images of Śiva and Pārvatī seated in *vīrāsana* with four and two hands respectively.[20]

2. Another sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara is noticed on the exterior wall of a shrine near Pātalāgaṅga at Śrīsailam. In this sculpture, the deity is seated on a hill in the *vyatyastapāda* posture. He has four hands. He is holding *nāga* in the upper right and *triśūla* in the upper left. The lower hands hold a *vīṇa* resting on the chest[21]. There is one breast on the right side. It should be noted here that in the Ardhanārīśvara images, a prominent breast should be shown on the left side but here it is on the right side. This sculpture differs from the description of the texts.

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3. There is yet another sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara on the wall to the left of the entrance of the Śiva shrine near Pātalāgaṅga at Śrīsailam. The deity stands in *dvibhaṅga* and has four arms. The right half is male and the left half female. The left half of the figure contains a prominent round breast in clear contrast to the flat chest in the other half of the figure. The upper right arm holds *triśūla* and the lower right is in *abhaya*. The head is adorned with *kirīṭamakuṭa*. The right ear is adorned with *makarakuṇḍala* while the left ear is having *cakrakuṇḍala*. He is adorned with graivēyakas, *channavīra* and *pūrnoruka*. To the right of Ardhanārīśvara is the figure of Śiva standing in *samabhaṅga* and holding his appropriate weapons. The presence of Śiva by the side of Ardhanārīśvara is noteworthy.[22] The lower in *varada* differs from the texts.

4. The shrine to the north - east of the Mallikārjuna temple of Śrīsailam, houses a four armed stone image of Ardhanārīśvara. Seated on a vedi which contains a row of lions, this deity holds *triśūla* in the upper right, *utpala* in the upper left and keeps the lower right and left in *abhaya* and *varada* respectively. There is a single breast on the left side.[23]

5. The north *gopura* of the Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple at Tāḍipatri also contains an image of Ardhanārīśvara. The deity stands in *samabhaṅga,* holding *mṛiga* in the upper right hand, *nīlotpala* in the upper left and keeps the lower right in *abahaya* and the lower left in *varada*. There is a single breast on the left side.[24] *Mṛiga* in the upper right hand and the lower left hand in *varada* found in this sculpture are not mentionedin the texts.

The iconographical features of the sixteen images of Ardhanārīśvara are summarised and given here in the tabular form.

Conclusion

The comparative iconographical study of the sixteen images of Ardhanārīśvara reveals that:

(i) In the Early Chāḷukya and Eastern Gaṅga arts, Ardhanārīśvara is represented in ***sthānaka*** posture.

(ii) In the Eastern Chāḷukya and Viajayanagara arts, the deity is represented in two postures i.e., in ***sthānaka*** and ***āsīna*** postures.

(iii) In the Western Chāḷukya and the Teulugu Cola Arts, Ardhanārīśvara is depicted in ***āsīna*** posture only.

(iv) Generally seated images of Ardhanārīśvara are rare. Nowhere in the ***Śilpa*** texts it is stated that the figure of Ardhanārīśvara may be a seated one and

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TABULAR STATEMENT OF ARDHANĀRĪŚVARA IMAGES IN THE TEMPLE ART OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Sl. No	Temple and the period to which Ardhanārīśvara belonged	Posture	No. of Hands	Upper Right	Upper Left	Lower Right	Lower Left
1.	Early Chālukya Miniature of Model Shrine, Yēllēśvaram	*Sthānaka*	4	*nāga*	bud	*triśūala*	resting on hip
2.	Bālabrahma Temple, Alampūr	*Sthānaka*	4	*nāga*	*utpala*	*triśūala*	hanging
3.	Saṅgamēsvara temple, Kūḍavalli	*Sthānaka*	4	*triśūla*	flower	resting on the bull	hanging
4.	Eastern Chālukya Gōliṅgēśvara temple Biccavolu	*Sthānaka*	4	*triśūla*	khaṭvaṅga	*kapāla*	*kaṭihasta*
5.	Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple, Pālakollu	*Āsīna*	4	*paraśu*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*
6.	Eastern Ganga Sōmēśvara temple, Mukhaliṅgam	*Sthānaka*	4	curved object	*utpala*	*round object*	*whip*
7.	Sōmēśvara temple, Mukhaliṅgam	*Sthānaka*	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*darpaṇa*	*varada*
8.	Madhukēśvara temple Mukhaliṅgam	*Sthānaka*	4	akṣamāla	*darpaṇa*	*round object*	*kaṭihasta*
9.	Western Chāḷukya Paccala Sōmēśvara tempe, Pānagallu	*Āsīna*	4	*nāga*	flower	*abhaya*	*broken*
10.	Telugu Cōḷa Manumaśiddhēśvara temple, Krishnapaṭnam	Seated	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*hanging*
11.	Manumaśiddhēśvara temple, Krishnapaṭnam	Seated	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*
12.	Vijayanagara Malikārjuna temple, Śrīsailam	Seated	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*
13.	Siva shrine, Pātalagaṅga, Śrisailam	*Sthānaka*	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*
14.	Siva shrine, Pātālagaṅga Śrisaiam	*Āsīna*	4	*nāga*	triśūla	*vīṇa in the two hands*	
15.	Shrine to N-E of Malikārjuna temple Srīsaiam	*Āsīna*	4	*triśūla*	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*
16.	Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple, Tāḍipatri	*Sthānaka*	4	mriga	*utpala*	*abhaya*	*varada*

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this particular mode of representation found in the Eastern Chālukya, Western Chālukya, Telugu Cola and Vijayanagara arts is noteworthy for its breach of the rule in this respect.

(v) In the Early Chālukya, Eastern Chālukya and Western Chālukya arts, the contents in the upper hands and the positions of the lower hands of the images of Ardhanārīśvara differ from the descriptions of the iconographic texts. This shows that the sculptures, of these periods did not stick to the rules laid down in the *Śilpa* texts.

(vi) In the Eastern Gaṅga art, the depiction of Ardhanārīśvara is in accordance with the prescriptions of the texts.

(vii) In the Telugu Cola art, of the two sculptures, one is in accordance with the texts, while the other which is an eight handed variety is not described by the texts. This is a new and a rare example.

(viii) Except the eight handed sculpture of Telugu Cola art, in all the images of Ardhanārīśvara under discussion, the right and left halves represent Śiva and Pārvatī respectively. From top to the feet, the two halves are clearly demarcated. Even in the context of head dress and ornaments, we can notice a difference between the two halves, the one on the left being that of a female, while the other on the right that of a male. An interesting iconographic feature of the eight handed sculpture of the Telugu Cola art is that its right half is female (Pārvatī) and the left half is male (Śiva).

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(See Plates 16 to 19 at the end of the text)

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7

TRISSUR VATAKKUNATHAN TEMPLE A STUDY OF ITS SPECIALITIES

*T.P. Sankarankutty Nair**

The Śaiva cult had its genesis atleast from the Paśupati cult of the Indus Valley Civilazation (Circa 3000 BC). Since then it spread far and wide and it reached the south western coast of India as well. The legend is that the semi-divine and semi human Lord Paraśurāma created 108 Śaiva temples all over the Western Coast, one of which was Vatakkunathan temple of Trissur district of modern Kerala State. Trissur as you know, was one of the twin capitals of the erstwhile princely state of Cochin - a state which became free from the control of the second Chera Kingdom popularly known as the Kulasekharas (800-1124 AD), subsequent to its disintegration[1]. Cochin state then known as Perumpadappu Swaroopam rose to prominance after the great flood in the river Periyar in the year 1341 as a result of which the Kulasekhara capital of Mahodayapuram (modern Cranganore of Kodungallur) was mostly destroyed.[2] The royal family got shifted to Perumpadappu near Ernakulam out of which developed the Cochin royal family with Trippunithura as headquarters. Since Cochin state had its boundaries upto Tattamangalam in Chittur taluk of modern Palakkad district, construction of a second capital seemed essential.[3] This led to the rise of Trissur as the second capital of Cochin state and at present the cultural and spiritual capital of modern Kerala.

From the early centuries of Christian Era, both Jainism and Buddhism found considerable support in the early Chera Kingdom. While Buddhism spread more to the southern districts of modern Kerala, Jainism found considerable following in places like Kalpetta (Wynad), Ganapathivattam (Sultan's Battery), Jainamedu (Palakkad), Kallil (Perumbavoor) and other places.[4] With the spread of Islam efforts were made to retain the strongholds of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism.[5] This is

* Depearment of History, University College, Tiruvananthapuram-695 034

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possible because of the pioneering efforts made by Ādi Śaṅkara (788-820) who through his Advaita Philosophy gave a shock treatment to all non-Hindu sects.[6] This reiuvenation of Hinduism resulted in the construction, renovation and remodelling of hundreds of temples. During the period of the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram, who like the Guptas in North Indian history, gave a fillip to the spread of Hinduism. Of the twelve or thirteen important Kulasekharas, half of them were ardent preachers of Śaivism. No wonder the Śiva temples consecrated by Lord Paraśurāma was renovated in the 10th century. Vatakkunathan temple too is believed to be one of the temples renovated during the early Kulasekhara period i.e. 9th century AD.[7] There are references to this temple in Sanskrit works like *Mayuradoothu Kokilasandesa* etc.

The main *Sreekovil* of the temple was built during the late 9th century by Mullappally Namboodiri, a person like Chennos Namboodiri (who wrote *Tantrasamuchaya*) was an architect and sculptor. In epigraphs of medieval Kerala, there are references to Chathan Suruvan Mullapally and Chuvadan Kantan Mullappally, the former who lived in the 11th century and the latter who lived in the 16th century as architects and sculptors responsible for the renovation and remodelling of the temple. It was perhaps during the period of the reign of Veera Kerala Rama Verma (1601 - 1615) of Perumpadappu that the temple was reconstructed to a large extent.[8] It was an age of compromise that Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava sects of Kerala generally became less antagonistic towards the other. Naturally Viṣṇu idols were consecrated in Śaiva temple as in Thiruchengannur and Vatakkunathan. Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa and Śrī Rāma idols were consecrated during this period of conciliation apart from the main deity of Vatakkunathan or Lord Śiva (Plate 21).

The Chief God - Lord Śiva-is looking towards the West but he got the name Vatakkunathan - nāthan of Vadakku or north because he acted as the protector of the northern regions of the Cochin state. In the original capital of Cochin or Perumpadappu - Trippunithura - there is a temple of Viṣṇu in the *Santanagopalamurthi* pose. The tantrics, temple authorities and the chroniclers used to treat Vatakkunathan as the Lord of the northern part of the state. Hence Lord Śiva is more popular as Vatakkunathan. Nilakantan who compiled *Thenkailanathodayam* was a contemporary of Veera Kerala Verma who testified to the renovation work.

During April - May comes off the *Pooram* at Trissur (Trichur), one of the most important of the festivals of Kerala. Infact, the excellence of a Kerala festival is commonly measured by the degree of its resemblance to the Trissur Pooram. From the early hours of the day, small elephant processions start from the surrounding temples carrying the idol and all its paraphernalia and it ends at the Vatakkunathan

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temple premises.[9] Besides main deities of Śiva and Pārvatī, there are shrines for Śaṅkaranārāyana, Śrī Rāma, Śrī Gaṇeśa, Śrī Ayyappa, Śrī Paraśurāma, Ādiśaṅkara, Śrī Kriṣṇa, Ṛiṣabha, and Simhodara. The *matilakam* is very extensive and has four gateways or *gopurams,* each one facing each quarter. While the superstructure was built with wood and laterite, the basement was built with granite. The former is adorned with beautiful sculptures on wood and stone and the corners are graced with paintings in plaster of paris.[10]

During the Mysorean interlude (1766-1792), the forces of Tipu Sultan seemed to have camped here. The temple facilities were fully utilised by the soldiers for war with Cochin and Travancore. It is a moot point of dispute whether Tipu touched the sanctum sanctorum or not. It remains even today a controversial subject whether Tipu had given land grant to the temple or not before his departure.[11] The temple is completely free from all festivals and festivities in honour of the main Lord - Vatakkunnathan or Kailāśapati or Śiva. The *Srimoolasthan* is situated on the Western side of the spacious *Matilakam.*[12]

Architecture has been defined as the matrix of civilization. The architectural remains are the main visible records through the different ages of man's intellectual evolution. The South Indian temple architecture developed along independent lines and gave rise to building modes which were quite distinct from those of North India. On account of its massiveness and volume, Kerala temple architecture is essentially unique.[13] I can't say that it is Dravidian. It is more indigenous. A mixture of Nāgara, Vesara and Dravidian features can be seen in Vatakkunathan. (Plate 20)

Most of the temples including the Vatakkunathan temple of Trissur has had a style of its own. The central shrine was in vesara-Vatta style. In earlier centuries, temples were like Buddhist *Vihāras*. The door in the front part was not round in shape. The beautiful *gopuram* in the southern side was constructed in 1780. During this period the *dejure* sovereign of Cochin was Rama Varma (1775-1790). Due to ill health the *defacto* Saktan Tampuran (1790-1805) in his capacity as the heir apparent prince took over the administration of the temple, with a view to renovate it.[14] Most of the big structures which we see even today were strengthened by Saktan Tampuran. Its lengthy fortress like walls and other mini temples were all completed by this strong prince of Cochin - Martanda Varma of Cochin.[15]

The *Yogathiries* of the temple created a lot of problems in the regular conduct of administration. This also compelled Saktan Tampuran to take over its administration.[16] It was Saktan Tampuran who began the great *Pooram* festival - one of the most important festivals of Kerala. Nine temples of close proximity take part

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in the elephant processions including the famous Paramekkavu and Thiruvambady temples. It is in fact these two lend colour and beauty to the whole show.[17] In the evening the two processions meet in the glory of the setting sun and the thirty selected tuskers with their gorgeous trappinga and glittering coloured umbrellas rise above a surging mass of humanity with the whole scene bathed in the golden glow of the evening present a spectacle of unparalleled splendour.[18] Though there are other festivals in Kerala with bigger elephant processions, not one is as impressive as the Trissur gathering. Trissur's *Pooram* is a dream festival in a dream city. The processions are repeated at night followed by the choicest display of fire works. From the days of Saktan Tampuran till date, it is conducted without any break thanks to the blessings of Vatakkunathan. It is conducted on the midnight of *Uthram* star of the *Medam* month (April - May) of Kollam Era.

Ādi Śaṅkara was responsible for installing *sankha* (conch) and *chakra* (wheel) symbols of Viṣṇu in the temple. The *samādhi* of Ādi Śaṅkara also took place in this temple. The followers of Ādī Śaṅkara set up four *mutts* (math) behind the Vatakkunathan temple. Padmapadar established southern *mutt*, Sureswaran middle *mutt*, Hasthamalakan *Edayil mutt* (*mutt* in between) and Thodakan northern mutt. The religious ceremonies conducted by Ādi Śaṅkara used to be performed by the divines of these *mutts* in Vatakkunathan temple even today.[19]

The mural paintings of the temple were painted atleast in three or four periods. The oldest is of course the *Natarāja Nṛtya* painting of the *Nandi Manapa* in front of the main Vatakkunathan idol.[20] Similarly in and around the Śaṅkaranārāyana temple walls also, we see paintings of our hoary past. The murals of the Ṛiṣabha temple inside also attract our attention. The rest of the murals seen in the main temple walls and the walls of the Śrī Rāma temple were all done in the Ravi Varma style and repainted in late fifties of the 20th Century. Originally there were 57 paintings, however, we see today only 48.[21]

The Vyasasila, the Nagarāja idols, the idol of Ādi Śaṅkara, Vettakkorumakan, Chidambaranāthan, Kāśī Viśvanāthan, Bhagavathy of Kodungallur, Sri Moolastan, Vasuki etc. are some of the other important shrines of the temple of three Śiva's big residence (Three *Śiva* + *Periya* + *Ur*). The Koothambalam, one of the largest in South India, where cultural programmes used to be staged, is without a parallel. Excluding the gigantic Śrī Padmanābha Swāmi temple at Trivandrum and Sri Guruvayoor temple of Trissur district, Trissur Vatakkunathan temple is the largest of all temples of modern Kerala State. Although Vaikam temple was chosen for the Vaikam *satyagraha* of 1924-25 by Mahatma Gandhi, the most powerful Śiva temple of Kerala is Trissivaperoor Vatakkunathan.

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We will understand its magnitude and grandeur only when we see it. In the history of Hinduism and Śaivism in particular Vatakkunathan temple of Trissur occupies a preeminent position due to its artistic, historical, spiritual and religious specialities. (Plate 22).

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8

ŚIVA TEMPLE AT PRAMBANAN ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE A REVIEW

*Tara Kashyap**

Popularly known as the temple of Lara Jonggrang, Śiva temple at Prambanan complex is one among the several Śaiva monuments scatered all over Central Java in Indonesia. Spread of Saivism in this region was a part of cultural phenomena which was gradual and long lasting. It had survived the struggle for spiritual supremacy and had established itself as an important sect of Brahminical faith, as is evidenced by number of inscriptions, monuments and retlected in socio - cultural practices.[1] The Śivagriha inscription now preserved in Jakarta museum gives interesting historical details regarding the temple, its construction and the purpose for which the construction was undertaken.

De Casparis, who read and translated the inscription, mentions that it was issued by Rakai Pikatan in 856 A.D, during thr reign of Dyah Lokapala. He is believed to have constructed the temple to express his gratitude to god for the victory he had won in the war. The discovery of another inscription subsequently to this however is suggestive of Rakai Pikatan himself having caused the temple to be built at Prambanan, which he named *Śivagriha Śivālaya*.[2]

In 10th century A.D. the monument suffered extensive damage due to an earthquake and volcanic eruptions of mount Mirapi located in the close proximity. The monument had been buried under 6 meter deep volcanic lava for centuries. A Dutchman C A Lons in credited with discovering the monument in 1733 A.D. which by then had been covered by thick forest.[3] The tireless efforts of the Dutch

* Hon. director (Publication) International Centre for Indian Art and Cultural Studies, Bangalore.

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officials, in the initial stages and the Indonesian authorities at later phases of restoration have contributed immensely to the conservation and maintenance of the temple complex at Prambanan.

Like any other temple in Indonesia, in course of time Śiva temple also came to be known as *dharma or caṇḍi* after the Caṇḍi or Durgā cult which had gained great popularity during that period. The impact of Caṇḍi cult was so intense that all the places of worship irrespective of cult affiliations acquired the name Caṇḍi and were generally structured on the model of Mahāmeru.

Caṇḍi Śiva likewise was conceived as Mahāmeru, is situated in a large area bound by 3 concentric court yards one within the other, connected by gateways. A tall imposing structure, it is flanked by Brahmā and the Viṣṇu temples, which are relatively of lesser dimension. Aligned in front at a distance, each of these temples have smaller temples for the vāhanas namely Haṁsa, Nandī and Garuḍa respectively. Also located within these concentric court yards are the temples for Parivāra, Apit, Kelir and Potak deities whose description in local texts approximately corresponds to *Dikpālas* and *Navagrahas*, guarding the cardinal points and the gates. With the exception of Nandī, none of the shrines have their originally enshrined figures of vāhanas.[4]

ARCHITECTURE

There are altogether 240 temples in the Prambanan complex with few in good state of preservation. In conceptualisation, though the architects appear to have adhered to the rules laid down in Vāstu texts, the constructional style, however, reveal traits which are alien to the prevailing architectural conventions followed on the main land. Technically these temples can neither be grouped under conventional categorisation of *Nāgara, Dravida* and *Vesara* nor can they be identified with any of the sub-styles. The presence of architectural components like *garbha griha, śikhara, pradakṣināpatha* are not in any way identical with the above categories. The *garbha griha* for instance in Śiva temple is what could be termed as a "*multiple* sanctum", accommodating Śiva, Agasthya, Gaṇeśa and Mahiṣamardinī facing east, south, west and north respectively.

The structure is developed on a multi-pointed base without being strictly stellate as is the case in many of the monuments of medieval India.[5] The verticality of *śikhara* has vague resemblance to slim Nāgara spiers without curves or definite linearity.[6] The stepped pyarmidal form decorated with multi-pinacled miniature shrines is not sufficiently emphasized, to bracket them into the Dravida group. They appear too tall to be identified with either the *Vesara* or the *Bhumija* style

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of architecture.[7] The monument possesses some traits of all these styles in pleasing proportions retaining, however, distinct regional variation.

SCULPTURE

Equally interesting are the sculptures, which are composed of cult images, *vāhanas, Dikpālas, Parivāra devatās*, narrative reliefs and the decorative motifs.

The positioning of the deities do not confirm to the sāstric injunctions.[8] The cult image in the sanctum which is wrongly, identified as Mahādeva by the local scholars is that of a male deity whose attributes do not correspond to any known texts on iconography. Larger than the life size image is standing in *samapāda*. The object in the upper right hand is identified as *akṣamāla* while in the upper left is *cāmara*. The lower left hand appears to be holding a damaged *gadā* which is indistinct.[9] It is possible that the image does not belong to this temple. It is possible that it was recovered from the ruins of some other temple and installed in the sanctum of Śiva temple.

Of greater interest is the image of Agasthya of Śivamahāguru. The life size image of Agasthya is a squatish with sturdy limbs. The figure is represented as standing in *samapāda*. The face with beard and moustache appears rather heavy. The ornate rendering of *jatā* has the appearance of a *kiriṭamukuṭa*. The other traditional ornaments decorating the figure include *hāra, bāhu valayas,* bracelets and anklets. He is represented as wearing a *dhotī* and an *aṅgavastra*. A part of *aṅgavastra* is tied to the waist with rest of it flowing. The right hand, which is held near the chest, is holding *akṣamāla*. The left hand is holding *kamaṅdalu*. *Triśūla* rests at the back. *Cāmara* appears stuck in the left arm pit.[10]

A large figure of seated Gaṇeśa has the soles of the feet joined together - a feature very common in Javanese sculpture. He has a third eye and is adorned with traditional ornaments. He holds *akṣamāla* and *paraśu* in his hands. The *cāmara* in upper right hand is an indication of Gaṇeśa being an attendent deity. The image bears resemblance to some of the earlier forms of Gaṇeśa sculpted in south India.[11]

The most fascinating figure is that of Mahiṣamardinī - locally known as Lara Jonggrang. The many armed, slim waisted *devī* is standing in *tribhaṅga* on an animal, identified by the local scholars as a cow. In one of the left hands she is holding the *Mahiṣa* by the hair. She has a third eye and is adorned with traditional ornaments. What is interesting about the figure is the conceptualisation, which is rather intriguing. For the mythology of Mahiṣamardinī and Lara Jonggrang, the heroine of the local legends are so inextricably assimilated that it raises several

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doubts regarding some iconographic traits. Lara Jonggarang, the daughter of a king ruling in this region, on being proposed by a prince, challenged him to build thousand temples, in a night, as a precondition for marriage which the prince agreed to fulfill. When the prince's architects had finished building all but one temple, the princes ordered her maids to pound the rice as an indication of the down. The prince could not marry Lara Jonggrang as he had not been able to fulfill the condition of building the temples before dawn. Later however when he realised that he had been cheated, he cursed the princes to turn into a stone statue. His father who was unhappy with his son's impatience cursed him to become a cow and stay with her forever in that state. The superimposition of the myth of Mahiṣ āsuramardinī on the local legend, had over a period of time led to the formulation of a figure with the traits of both the traditions. The most striking feature is, instead of riding a lion, Mahiṣamardinī is represented as having a cow as her *vāhana.*[12]

The entrance of the Śiva temple is guarded by Mahākāla and Nandīśvara. The figures appear larger than life size. Mahākāla stands with his legs slightly flexed, with a fierce appearance. He is adorned with traditional ornaments. Mahākāla is resting his right hand on the *gadā,* while the left holds unidentifiable object. The lower part of the body is covered with *dhotī.*

Nandīśvara stands at the left of the entrance to *garba griha* of Śiva, with legs slightly flexed. He is adorned with the traditional ornaments. The right hand of Nandiśvara hangs down with a flower stuck in the palm. The left hand holds a *cāmara.*[13]

There are other figures and groups of figures, which are referred to as *Dikpālas* and *Lokapālas.* The figure of Lokapāla is seated in *padmāsana.* The right hand is held in *varadamudrā,* while the left hand is laid on the thighs. He has a *jaṭāmukuṭa* and long pointed beard. As in the figure of Agasthya, the *triśūla* is placed at the back of the figure and *cāmara* rests on the left shoulder. The Lokapāla is flanked by ascetics holding *kamaṅḍalu* and *cāmaras.*[14]

NARRATIVES RELIEFS

Another very interesting feature of Śiva temple is the series of narratives based on *Rāmāyaṇa.* The *Rāmāyaṇā* reliefs appear on the inner side of balustrade surrounding the temple. Starting from left to right, extending up to the entrance on the east. There are 24 panels in all. The narrative starts with gods praying Viṣ ṇu residing in Tuśita heaven to incarnate himself on earth to destory demon Rāvaṇa. Viṣṇu-incarnates himself as Rāma and born as the son of Daśaratha. Some selected themes from Bālakāṇḍa, Araṇyakāṇḍa and Ayodhyākāṇḍa are depicted with

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great skill and imagination. The Kākāsura legend for instance, in rendering of which the folk elements are so predominent that it has led the local scholars to interperet it as a domestic scene. The scene is identified as Sitā cooking meat, a piece of which is caried away by a crow. Rāma is chasing the crow with the bow and an arrow. There are several such scenes occurring on these monuments which offers great scope for research in folklore, ethnic traditions and arts.[15]

DECORATIVE MOTIFS

The motifs decorating the *adhiśtāna* and the other parts of the temple exhibit a great variety. They appear on the monument in decorative as well as in mythical idioms. These panels are 32 in number, carved with motifs based on flora, fauna and some mythical concepts. Among the floral motifs are leafs, creepers and lotus flowers. Creepers appear as emerging out of vase or *kalaśa,* blown out of the mouth of lions and deer and lotus flower. Van Der Hoop, a Dutch expert is believed to have identified these different varieties of lotuses as Nelumbium speciosum (*Padma*), Nyamphaesa Stelleta (*Utpala*) and Nayamphaesa Lotus (*Kumuda*) each having a distinctive trait of its own.[16] Among the motifs composed of fauna found represented on the monuments in Prambanan temple complex include reptiles, fish, crocodile, snail, crab, rat, crow, dove, hawk, squirrel, hare, deer, horse, lion and elephant.[17]

The most outstanding panel is the one, which depicts the mythical concepts and forms. *Kalpavrikṣa/Kalpataru* or the wish fulfilling tree obtained while the churning of the ocean appear frequently on the monuments. Four bags fastened with ornamental chains hang from the branches of *Kalpavrikṣa* which emerges from a decorated pot. The tree carved in the form of a mountain locally refrred to as Kekayon is rendered in a highly stylised manner.[18]

The posture of the seated lion identified as being in its Jagarta form, is characterised by a fierce and an arrogant look known in local language as *mattarupina*. The position of the fore legs with the soles turned upwards is mentioned as being *khumaransaimba*. Flanking the lions are kinnara and kinnari the mythical forms endowed with human and bird traits. The panel depicting these motifs, embedded within niches are examples of exquisite pieces of sculptures. It s believed to be the only one of its kind in Indonesia.[19] Even in India, a composition of this nature is not common.

In conclusion, it can be said that the survey of Śiva temple at Prambanan reveals certain significant aspects, which are interesting and intriguing.

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a) Architecture does not seem to have been based on any particular text. It is possible that the architectural plan was conceived on the basis of the impressions derived out of visual perceptions or translations of verbal imagery of an eyewitness.

b) Even as regards sculptures, they do not strictly confirm to any iconographic norms laid down in the texts. The image of a deity in the main sanctum identified as Śiva is represented in anthropomorphic form instead of in the phallic form. Granting that the figure is that of Śiva, the attributes held are inapporpriate. Instead of *triśula,* Śiva is represented as having an *akṣamāla* and a *cāmara,* with what appears to be a *gadā* in lower left hand. *Cāmara* and *gadā* in Śaiva iconography are the attributes of attendent deities.

c) The figure of Agasthya has a *triśūla* and *cāmara.* Similarly Gaṇeśa is shown as holding a *cāmara.*

Mahīṣamardinī's image though has all the required elements as stated in *Śāstras,* in its depiction, the sculptors seemed to have been influenced by the legend of Lara Jonggrang. The *devī,* as pointed out earlier, has a cow and not a lion as her *vāhana* which is crouching timidly near her feet.

The narrative reliefs have some scenes from *Rāmāyaṇa,* which indicate a departure from the established tradition. The episodes which are rendered in the folk idiom appear far removed from the original sources based on the versions of Valmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa.* It is possible that in the process of being transplanted, Indian myths, legends and folklore at some point in history got assimilated with the local traditions resulting in the formulation of new concepts and forms.

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(See Plates 23 and 24 at the end of the text)

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9

GAYA : A POTENTIAL CENTER OF ŚAIVISM AND ITS ART

Arvind Mahajan

On the religious map of Hindu world *Gayā Kṣetra*[1] is marked for being the centers of *Śrāddha* (ancestor worship), Vaiṣṇavism and Buddhism. For *Śrāddha*, it is the *Pitṛ tīrtha par excellence*[2], commanding reverence all over the Hindu domain. For Buddhists, it is one of the *chatur Bauddha Mahātīrthas* (four Great Buddhist pilgrimages) as the *Sambodhi tīrtha,* whereas for the Vaiṣṇavites it is the *Viṣ ṇudhām*, enshrining Lord Viṣṇu in *vyktā-vyakta* form (foot prints of the Lord), thus pushing its antiquity back to the time when figurative manifestation or rather conception of Viṣṇu had not taken around.

But a micro-analysis of the religious developments in the region reveal that prior to the development of Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism was a strong religious force. Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism made their edifices on the ground of Śaivism, courtesy patronage from royal authorities, added by a well-managed aggresive propaganda. But it does not mean at all that Śaivism lost its ground in the Gaya region or in its greater part. It continued and maintained its entity only due to its imprint being too indelible to be erased from the minds of the people, as even after the dominance of Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism people continued to rever Śiva along with. Sometimes, Śiva also dominated the religious horizon or the land which is well evidenced in *Śrāddha* rituals. In course of *Śrāddha*, final oblation is made at Akṣayabaṭa - the site of Baṭeśvara Śiva, and only here offerings and gifts are made to the officiating priest of *Śrāddha*. Without doing so, i.e. making oblation at Akṣ ayabaṭa, the entire ritual is deemed incomplete and fruitless.

At present *Śrāddha* rituals at Gaya are performed at 45 sites, called *vedīs*, which may be classified as -

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(i) those associated with Brahmā

(ii) those associated with Yama

(iii) those associated with Śiva

(iv) those associated with Sun god, and

(v) those associated with Viṣṇu and his incarnations.

This classification throws ample light upon the cultural exchange, fusion and development that Gaya had experienced from the pre-Aryan times. The *Śraddha* sites or *vedīs* virtually are the crystallised forms of cultural fusion involving imposition and acceptance of the cultural heritages, customs and rites of two types of people- Āryans and Asuras (non -Aryans). The Asuras and Vrātyas of Kikaṭa (ancient Magadha) were worshippers of Rūdra Śiva and his phallic manifestation[3] besides their reverence for demi-gods like Yakṣas and Nāgas. It is very difficult to mark that when the Asuras and Vrātyas of the region were pounced upon by the Āryan culture, and when many of their religious beliefs and practices were assimilated in the Brahminic form of Vedic religion. However, following are the cultural strata which become apparent in the Gaya region -

(i) pre-Āryan or Asura

(ii) Śiva-Śakti cult

(iii) Vedic cult of Brahmā, Yama and Sun

(iv) *Paurāṇik* cult of Viṣṇu.[4]

B.M. Barua ventures to mark the cultural development of Gaya region in the legend of Gayāsura. Barua writes, "Indeed the legend of Gayāsura in *Vāyu Purāṇa* clearly brings out the fact that the predominance of Viṣṇu at Gaya came to be recognised only at a late stage. With a view to coping with vigorous efforts of the demon Gayāsura (which ultimately represents the dominance of Asura or non-Āryan culture) the first deity which the gods thought it fit to approach was Brahmā, the next deity was Śiva, and the third or last deity was Viṣṇu"[5]. From the legend it may be avowed that prior to the advent of Viṣṇu on the religio-cultural horizon of Gaya, Śiva held sway over the same.

Since the convention of Buddha till date, religio-cultural screen of Gaya has witnessed a sort of struggle between Śaivism and Buddhism. For Śaivism, this struggle was and is rather for the assertion of right to existence than for the establishment of supremacy. Throughout this age long struggle, Śaivism has generally been on the defensive and occasionally on the aggressive. But on the contarary

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Buddhists have more often shown aggressive gesture by depicting Buddhist deities in the act of humiliating Śiva and his kins.

Prior to the advent of Buddha, the religio-cultural proceedings of not only BodhGaya region but of the entire Gaya region were dominated by Jaṭilas, the predecessors of Śaiva ascetics, led by three brothers, viz. Uruvela, Nadī and Gayā[6]. They hold unquestioned sway over the region and were over-confident, unmindful of what was pretended by the appearance of a new star on the horizon, i.e. the Buddha. The princely ascetic Siddhārta was completely at liberty to move about and act as he pleased, and seek a religious career as well he might. Even his Great Attainment did not excite their grudge or jealousy, and his movements and ponderings immediately following it did evoke any feeling of suspicion neither. Buddhist literatures authenticate to that for Buddha to influence and bring Jaṭila brothers to his fold was really a hard not to crack.[7]

Thus even the Buddhist literatures avouch that Śaivism, though in its pristine form, dominated the BodhGaya region from the very begining. In the region of Gaya proper the transfer of religio-cultural authority to Viṣṇu was without much hullabaloo, rather with a mutual understanding to go side by side. Moreover, various socio-cultural developments, combinations and permutations kept Viṣṇu on fore-front. Among these mention may be made of the cult of *Bhakti* and the emergence of the cult of Vāsudeva[8], having a broad-based following. *Bhāgvata* religion was the ultimate outcome of the same[9] which had a greater appeal due to provisions and embodiment of *yoga* and *bhoga* simultaneously. Identification of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, who was a human being, with Vedic Viṣṇu further accelerated the pace of Vaiṣṇavism[10]. Even after there is no report of any confrontation between the two prominent sects of the region, i.e. Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, but there are inscriptions referring to royal favour to Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva all along[11].

But at BodhGaya, the phenomena of ascendency of Buddhism was not so smooth. The Buddhists always had an aggressive gesture towards the Brahminical deities from the very begining, which is well substantiated by the Buddhist literatures, where Vedic gods have been referred to as below in rank to the Budhas and even as subordinates and attendents. When came the phase of iconic manifestation, Hindu deities were actually shown as attendents and hitherto under the feet of Buddhist deities. The intensity of aggression of the Buddhists was much more high for Śiva in particular, reason for which apears to be the dominance of Śiva at BodhGaya as well as at other places of Buddhist significance. Sometimes Buddhists also tried to make rapproachment with Śaivism when Maheśvara was entrusted with the benign work of acting as the guardian angel to Buddha[12]. If the testimony of

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Hiuen-tsang is relied upon, the present Mahābodhi temple is erection of devotional piety of a Śaivite Brahmin who undertook the costly work under inspiration from Śiva-Maheśvara, the Lord of Kailāśa[13]. Hiuen-tsang suggests that Maheśvara also inspired younger brother of the Brahmin to excavate the tank *Buddha Pokhar* to the south of the Great Temple, and the image, which Hiuen-tsang found enshrined in the main sanctuary of the temple, was the wonderful handiwork of a skilled *Brāhmaṇa* artist employed by the bulider of the temple[14]. If the two Brahmin brothers afterwards had become votaries of the Buddha, for that too, the credit for the Great Temple at BodhGaya is due at the first instance to Śiva-Maheśvara.

Perhaps one time domination of Śaivism at BodhGaya and there might have been some other reasons also, which made Śaśāṅka - the Gauḍa king to inflict irrepairable damage to Bodhi-tree, the nucleus of Buddhism, and to install a figure of Maheśvara inside the sanctum sanctorum of the Great Temple removing the statue of Tathāgata[15]. It appears that the motive of Śaśāṅka behind this vandalism was to install or rather reinstall Śaivism at BodhGaya.

Proceeding furtherdown to the earlier period of Pāla reign, i.e. end of 9th or begining of 10th cen. A.D., which was about to see the flowering of architectral and sculptural features in the life of Gaya region as a whole, and thereafter there appears a complete rapproachment between Śiva and Buddha. It is evidenced by a number of inscriptions which record installation of Śaivite figures inside Buddhist chapels.[16].

Thus in spite of the dominance of Viṣṇu and Buddha, Śiva never ceased to exist as a religious force at Gaya. He throughout maintained his entity and kept his presence felt, which is also accentuated by the ground survey of the region. Curiously enough the number of Śiva temples and art relics related to Śiva are much more in comparison to those of Viṣṇu and Buddha. It also needs mention that heritages of Śiva are widely pervaded while the art specimens belonging to Vaiṣ ṇavism and Buddhism predominantly occur round their respective centers, i.e. Viṣ ṇupad and BodhGaya respectively. It is quite interesting to find that Śiva or his kins may be found located in or around the centers of other cults, but relics of other cults can hardly be marked at Śaiva sites of the region. From this, it may be inferred that the other religions and cults of the region needed the help of Śiva to keep their followings with them while Śiva did not need anybody's help.

The heritage of the cult of Śiva in Gaya region may be put into different heads like temples, sacred sites where no any construction or manifestation for Śiva occurs (i.e. Siva in *avykta* or *vyktāvykta* form), inscriptions pertaining to erections and offerings in favour of Śiva, and the Śaivite sculptures. These are as:-

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***Temple of Phalgiśvara Śiva*:**

This is a small temple on eastern side of Viṣṇupad temple courtyard. It comprises a brick-built shrine and a four-pillared hall in front. The door is of fine-grained black stone (probably Brahmayoni Phyllite), much ornamented with images of four transcendental Buddhas on the lintel. The temple enshrines the Śiva-liṅga known as Phalgiśvara or the Lord of Phalgu, supposed to have been placed there by Brahmā, as suggests the tradition in vogue there.

At the door is an inscription on an old pillar, but part of it is built into the wall. The inscription is too illegible and incomplete to draw any inference. On a slab built into the wall there is another inscription. It was seen by Buchanan entirely legible during his survey but none of his men could decipher it except the date which was *Saṁvat* 141 (?), the last cyphar being not legible[17]. Details of the above inscriptions are not available any where.

Other Śaivite relics in Viṣṇupad complex:

Buchanan refers to a small *Śiva-liṅga* near the sacred impression of Viṣṇu's foot inside the sanctum sanctorum of the Viṣṇupad temple, which is supposed to have been installed by infidel Ban-Rāja[18]. And in the porch of the temple has been placed by Ahilya Bai, the patron behind the erection of the present Viṣṇupad temple, a bull very rudely carved in white marble[19].

On the southern side of hte Viṣṇupad temple there is an open area, in the south of which is an elevated terrace of stone, brick and plaster. It is called *Svarga dvāra* (gate of heaven) and on it lie several *liṅgas*. Into its perpandicular sides are built many images. Most of them belong to the Pāla aeon, on one of which representing Gaṇeśa is an inscription which is too worn out to read.

Shrine at Rām Gaya hill:

The hill, which has been refferred to as *Nāga Kūṭa* hill in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*[20], lies on the eastern shrore of Phalgu more or less opposite to the Viṣṇupad temple, and at that place Lord Rāma is said to have performed *śrāddha* for his father Daśaratha; and at that very place Sītā cursed Phalgu to become devoid of perennial streams.

There is nothing worth mentioning about the shirne but the Kalyāṇa Sundara Śiva images enshrined there. These images belong to the Pala age and may be put in 11th - 12th century time bracket. Cuningham reports a short inscription of Mahendrapāla Deva[21] at Rām Gayā[22].

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The temple at Gayā nābhi :

It lies to the west (a little southward) of Viṣṇupad campus. The place is supposed to be the naval of legendary Gayāsura. The temple, built of modern materials, enshrines a magnificent *liṅga* of Nabheśvara Mahādeva[23] belonging to the Pāla school.

The temple of Prapitāmaheśvara:

The temple enshrines a massive *liṅga* (about 3 feet high), known as Prapitāmaheśvara which finds mention in the *Gayā Mahātamya* of Vāyu *Purāṇa*[24]. The enshrined *liṅga* depicts one human face and the sacred thread over it. According to Barua, the *liṅga* represents Śiva and the human face represents Brahmā[25] and this curious form of Śiva *liṅga* appears to be a resultant of a compromise between the cults of Brahmā and Śiva.

The temple comprises a sanctum of 11 feet square and a pillared hall or *maṇḍapa* in front, which is 28 feet sqare. The pillars are monolithic bearing carvings. Cuningham states it as a restored temple built entirely of granite blocks[26]. Over the *maṇḍapa* are positioned five rudimentary *śikharas* four at corners and one in the centre, all being circular in contour without any decoration. The main spire over the sanctum sanctorum rises from a terrace like structure which is part of the spire. Then rising vertical to a little height, the spire above the terrace begins to incline inwards speeding up into a parabolic curve. The terrace as well as the spire are sqare in contour, the sides or faces of which are richly textured by menas of borizontal mouldings running in lines across recesed chases of the sides.

The Akṣayabaṭa temple inscription detailed below records the erection of this temple. The original construction thus might have belonged to 11th cen. A.D. or so.

The temple of Baṭeśvara Śiva at Akṣayabaṭa :

The temple is situated on a high and large terrace, underneath the sacred banyan tree called Akṣayabaṭa, i.e. the eternal banyan tree, and it forms the last stage in course of Gaya pilgrimage. Here the Gayāwāls, the officiating priests of *Gayā śrāddha*, attend every pilgrim, as it is here that all these perform the essential ceremony of offering *dakṣiṇā* (charity) and procure priest's declaration of their final piety.

The temple comprises a small sqare (about 6/6 feet) sanctum and a rudimentary pyramidal top. On the basis of the architectral plan and appearance the temple may be taken as the earliest temple of the region, in spite of being built

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of modern bricks and mortar[27]. However, in the Daniel print of the same[28] one can mark a Gupta lintel in the door-frame. The antiquity of temple is further corroborated by sculptures of Gaṇeśa, Umā-Maheśvara *et al* studded in the outer wall of the shrine and an inscription, all belonging to the Pāla-age.

The inscription records the installation a *Śiva liṅga* called *Baṭeśa* at the *Akṣ ayabaṭa* and also of another *Śiva liṅga* at *Prapitāmaheśvara* temple close by in the 5th regnal year of Pāla king Vigraphāla-III (1060 A.D.) by Viśvarūpa.[29]

Behind the sanctum lies on a raised platform about a dozen sculptures belonging to the Pala age. Among these mention may be made of a couple of *chaturmukha Śiva liṅgas*, images of Gaṇeśa, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Umā-Maheśvara etc.

The temple at Brahmayoni hill:

The highest of the hills encircling Gaya is the southern one and is known as Brahmayoni. It is so known due to a small natural fissure in the rock at the top of the hill, through which a person can just manage to crawl. This is looked upon as a symbol of *yoni* or womb, and is believed that crawling through it one escapes rebirth from human womb.

Close by, on the summit of the hill is a small temple enshrining a five-headed statue, said to be representation of Brahmā who is known to have four heads. Śiva may have five faces in Sadāśiva *mūrtis* which was the seal-device of Sena kings of Bengal whose ancestors hailed from the south (Karnāṭa country) and were devout worshippers of this aspect of Śiva[30]. The image and shrine may have been a contribution of the Senas who one time dominated the political scene of the region[31]. At this place Cuningham reports of a Śiva-Pārvatī image with the bull Nandi below and a short imperfect inscription in three lines, of which only one - half remained then, in the letters of 10th - 11th cen. A.D.[32].

The temple of Mārkaṇḍeyśvara Śiva:

Down the eastern slope of Maṅgalā Gaurī hill (a spur of Brahma yoni hill; referred to as *Bhaṣma kūṭa* after being the center of the ascetics of *Bhaṣmī* sect who were followers of Śiva[33]; also believed to have been the site where the *Jaṭilas*, the predecessors of *Śaiva* ascetics, lighted the ever blazing fire[34]), facing the Rukmīṇi tank, stands the temple of Mārkaṇḍeyśvara Śiva.

The temple has undergone series of repairs and restorations which are well evidenced by the materials, i.e. bricks and stone. In plan it comprises porch, assembly hall and sanctum sanctorum with a spire above which in appearance is

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very near to that of the Prapitāmaheśvara temple. Stylistically the temple may be put in 10th - 11th century time bracket[35].

Bhairava-sthāna temple:

About a kilometre north of Maṅgalā Gaurī is situated Bhairava-sthāna temple which is one of the earliest temples of the region. The temple is positioned on a high terrace (about 7 feet high), comprising a 8 feet sqare sanctum with two doors - one on the east and the other on the west facing each other, and a perambulatary path around. The western door appears to be the entrance because its height is only three feet and one can pass through only after bowing his head. It is a custom that entrance to the sanctum sanctorum is kept low in height so that one can enter there bowing himself before the Lord. The eastern opening is about five feet in height. A stair from east side leads to the terrace from the ground level and presently entrance to the temple is from east but to the sanctum proper is from west which substantiates its Śaivite affiliation.

Though the temple now is built of modern bricks and mortar, magnificent *tri-ratha* door jambs belonging to the later Gupta age fixed in both the openings of the shrine attribute a remote antiquity to the temple.

Inside the sanctum there is nothing in the name of object of worship except the foundation of a Siva *liṅga*. Around the sanctum on the terrace there are more than a dozen sculptures belonging to the Pāla age. Noteworthy among them are a *daśāvatāra* panel; a panel depicting Brahmāṇi, Vaiṣṇavī, and Maheśvarī; a detached stelae fixed in the western wall encircling the terrace; panels depicting Revanta on horse-back going on hunting along with Daṇḍa and Piṅgala; fragments of siva *liṅgas* etc.

The temple of Kardāmesvara Śiva:

This is an insignificant, modern, brick-built temple (10'/7'/12' i.e.l/w/h) at north-eastern corner of the junction of Nawagarhi road and Maulaganj-Bahuarchaura lane. It enshrines an ancient (Pāla) stone-made phallic emblem of Śiva, locally known as Kardāmeśvara Mahadeva, to which the *Purāṇas* offer citations in very glowing terms[36]. Besides the principal deity Kardāmeśvara, once there lied inside the temple and its compund stone images and bas-reliefs, a few of them being of artistic value, belonging to the time of the Pālas. Among these mention may be made of Sūrya, Gaṇesa, Umā-Maheśvara, Nava-graha, Saptamātṛkās, Devī and Śiva *liṅgas*.

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Śiva temple at Gāyatrī ghāt:

About one and half kilometre east (a little north ward) of the Kardāmeśvara temple, a long winding flight of steps leads from the highest rocky portion of the old city of Gaya down to a ghat on river Phalgu, known as Gāyatrī ghāṭ after an abandoned temple of Devī Gāyatrī. Just before where the stairs begin, to the right side stands a recently built temple comprising the snactum and an open hall in front. However, the hall has some pillars and roofing slabs from the original structure and in front of the same lie several pillars and roofing slabs of granite belonging to the olden structure. The sanctum enshrines a beautiful *mukhaliṅga* belonging to the Pāla age.

In the wall along the steps leading down to the ghat are fixed several sculptures like those of Umā-Maheśvara, Lakuliśa, Gaṇeśa, Nava graha etc. There is a recently built shrine at the ghāṭ and the deities being worshipped there are Mahiṣāsuramardinī and Umā-Maheśvara.

The temple of Pātāleśvara Śiva at Rāmśilā hill:

The hill to the north of the Gaya town is Rāmśilā. The granite temple on its summit enshrines a linga, called Pātāleśvara Śiva, as well as small figures of Śiva and Pārvatī. The upper portion of this temple is modern, being built of various ancient fragments that do not fit well together, and which are in some instances placed upside down. The lower part of the temple from 8 to 10 feet in height in undoubtedly old. And perhaps the date of *Saṁvat* 1071 or A.D. 1014, found on one of the slabs of granite, may record the actual period of erection of the temple[37]. The basement mouldings are strikingly effective and bold.

There is a small temple of Śiva just at the foot of the hill which, however, is at a height of about 10 feet from the road level. It enshrines a magnificent Śiva *liṅga* chiselled out in felspar (*sphaṭika*). It is built in so-called Islamic style with a dome by Tikayat Rai, Diwan of Nawab Vajir (of Audh) in 1791 A.D.[38].

The temple of Mātaṅgeśvara Śiva :

It stands by the side of a sacred tank located in Bakraur a village at about a kilometre east of BodhGaya on a narrow track land between Niranjanā and Mohane rivers. The tank which is known as Mātaṅgvāpī is one of the 45 *śrāddha* sites and has got mention in *Garuḍa* and *Agni Purāṇas*[39].

The temple, not very much old, comprises a small sanctum (about 5'/7') and a vestibule which is more or less 4' square. It appears that there might have been a small porch in front of the snactum and vestibule. The door-frame, floor

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and roof of the vestibule are of granite assigning a remote antiquity to the structure. Over the snactum is a small, plain, pyramidal tower. The snactum enshrines a Śiva *liṅga* in black stone.

In addition to that there are four other temples which appears to have been built later on. These temples comprise a small snactum, a small porch in front and a small pyramidal tower above, and they enshrine Śiva *liṅgas*. Besides one can mark a number of Saivite sculptures belonging to the Pāla age around the temples and the tank.

Śaiva Sites:

In the sacred complet of Gaya there are some *Śaiva* sites which have small and insignificant temples at present enshrining the phallic emblem of Lord Śiva, but are referred to as highly revered sites in the *Purāṇas* and other scriptures and have been accorded a very high status. Some such sites are -

Temple of Koṭiśvara Śiva who is the Lord of *Koṭi tīrtha*[40] at Mohalla Maranpur on Gaya-Bodh-Gaya old road.

Temple of Griddheśvara Śiva, the ruler of *Griddha kūṭa*[41] at Mohalla Godāvarī (known after the name of a tank - Godāvarī) to the north of Mārkaṇḍeyśvara Śiva and between the two eastern arms of the ridges of hill (Brahma yoni and others).

Temple of Kapileśvara Śiva which enshrines the *Anādi liṅga* and lies to the west of Prapitāmaheśvara temple.

Apart from these *Vāyu*[42] and *Agni*[43] *Puraṇas* refer to the following *Śaiva* sites, representing Śiva in different forms, in the sacred complex of Gaya - that of Aṅgīrasa, Kapardīśa, Gaṇanātha, Dviṣṭomeśvara, Phalgunātha, Sahasraliṅga, Siddheśa, Somanātha, Ekādaśa Rūdra, Ādi Mahārūdra, Aṣṭa liṅga, Suṣmeśvara, Rameśvara, Muṇḍapṛṣṭha, Jagganātha and Kedāra.

Relics of Śaivism at Bodh Gaya proper:

Today at BodhGaya nothing can be spotted in the name of Śaivism except some inscriptions recording donations and installations in favour of Śiva; a long feud between the Buddhist and *Mahanth* of BodhGaya for control over the shrine which may be taken as revival of the age old feud between Buddhists and Saivites, as the *Mahanths* are staunch Śaivites; records pertaining to the repairs and restorations of the temple by Beglar and Cuningham which refer to Śaivite relics in the Mahābodhi temple campus.

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An inscription, now housed in Indian Museum - Calcutta[44], records the installation of a *Mahādeva-Chaturmukha* in the BodhGaya temple by a stone-cutter named Ujjvala in the 26th regnal year of king Dharmapāla, son and sucessor of Gopāla deva[45]. This inscription clearly shows mutual co-existence of Śaivites and Buddhists at BodhGaya without any feeling of enimity or discord. The record goes so far as to indicate that a devout Hindu even had liberty to install a stone figure of *Mahādevaśchaturmukha* within the temple of *Buddha-Dharmeśa* for the benefit of the Śaivites of the locality.

The Śaivites and the Buddhists went side by side worshipping their respective Lords without any animosity at least upto 1872-73 when Beglar first visited the BodhGayā temple. Then Śaivites definitely had an edge there due to the *Mahanths*, who were staunch Śaivites, being custodian of the temple. These facts are well recorded in the letter written by J.D. Beglar to the Mahanth of BodhGaya on May14th, 1895. Beglar was the officer entrusted by the Government of Bengal to conduct the work of restoration of the Great Temple in 1871. The leltter also comprises the pre-restoration observation and report made by Beglar, who writes, "At this time there was the usual phallic emblem of Śiva occupying the central spot in the floor of the sanctum of the Temple, and I find I have noticed its existence in my official report printed and published by the Government in 1878. Gen. Cuningham had also noticed it previously. There was also the statue of Buddha, regarded by people as a statue of Bhairon (Bhairava or Śiva)"[46]. According to Beglar there lied other Śaivite sculpture in the temple campus - like those of Gaṇeśa, Hara-Gaurī etc.[47] Beglar further writes, "My second visit to BodhGaya was made at the end of the year 1879 or early in 1880, under the order of Sir Alexander Cuningham". I found, as before, worship being carried on daily (of Śiva and Buddha as Bhairon by Śaivites), and the phallic emblem still occupying the centre of the sanctum-floor of the Great Temple and the figure of Hara-Gaurī and others in their old places. There were, however, many changes in the exterior of the temple owing to the work done by the Burmese"[48]. Beglar writes that it was absolutely necessary for the work of repair to remove the phallic emblem from the centre of the snactum-floor of the Great temple and it was possible only after permission from the *Mahanth*, which was duly procured along with suspension of daily worship. These amply illucidate the authority of *Mahanth* over the temple and its precincts.

Next to the Great Temple, the largest building at BodhGaya is a *Śaiva Maṭh* or manastery, the chief of which is called *Mahanth*. It is situated on the left bank of Niranjanā, surrounded by a high masonary wall. Around the *Maṭh* building there are four temples, of which two are dedicated to Śiva, one to Jagganātha (another form of Śiva) and the remaining one to Rāma[49].

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The *Mahanth* of BodhGaya and his disciples had a great say over the local masses, who are mostly Hindus, at least until they had unquestioned authority over the Great Temple. Quite interestingly they are considered as temporal Śivas and more interesting is their mortuaries. There is a cemetry towards the south-west corner of the outer wall of the Math and also attached to the same (*Maṭh*). It contains graves of about 200 Śaivite monks who unlike other Hindus are burried after death. They body is burried in sitting posture, and in the case of mere neophyte a small circular mound of solid brick work from 3 to 4 feet high is all that is deemed necessary to cover the grave. For men of greater consequence a temple is held essential and in it immediately over the corpse a Śiva *liṅga* is invariably consecrated. For *Mahanth* or the chief of the *Maṭh* the temple is large and elaborately ornamented. Even on way from Gaya to BodhGaya by old road there are several monasteries of Hindu *sanyāsīs* and everywhere the graves are alike, i.e. enshrining Śiva *liṅga* over them. All these indicate to that one time Śaivism had its sway over the region.

SCULPTURES:

So far as sculptures are concerned they are countless, and most of the temples and religious sites of the region irrespective of their religious affiliation have sculptural representations of Śiva and his kins. Moreover at every nook and corner one can spot a *devālaya*, most of which have some Śaivite sculptures and of them some are really of antique and artistic value. Majority of these sculptures belong to the Pāla age or a bit earlier. Some worth mentioning sites in addition to the aforementioned temple sites are Pitāmaheśvara or Uttarmānas, Babhanīghāṭ, Pretśilā, Bāgeśvarī etc.

Uttarmānas or Pitāmeśvara is a *śrāddha* site, presently having temples of Sun-god, Śītalā mātā (Anger godess, to be worshipped after pox). Around and inside the temple there are sculptures of Umā-Maheśvara, Gaṇeśa, Śiva *liṅgas et al.* At this place annual fair is held on śivarātrī day (the marriage day of Śiva and Pārvatī). At Babhani ghāṭ, which is about a kilometre south of Pitāmaheśvara, there are temples of Sun-god and Devī. Here also one can find sculptures of Umā-Maheśvara and phallic emblem of Śiva. In the sanctum sanctorum of Viṣṇupad temple there is a beautiful image of *tapaścharyā* Pārvatī (the godess penancing in standing posture) in a niche in northern wall. Outside the temple of Phalgīśvara Śiva, in the northern wall there is a beautiful image of *Sadyojāta*. In the Kṛṣṇa-Dwārka temple, west but little northward of Viṣṇupad, there are beautiful images of Gaṇeśa, Umā - Maheśvara along with the images of Viṣṇu, Sūrya, fixed on the outer wall of the shrine. Inside the sanctum snactorum of the Gāyeśvarī temple in

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Viṣṇupad campus, there is a magnificent image of dancing Gaṇeśa in the western wall. Bāgeśvarī is a Devī temple on northern periphery of Gaya town and in its campus lie images of Uma-Maheśvara, Gaṇeśa, Nandī along with the phallic emblem of Śiva. Pretśilā marks the northern end of the sacred complex Gaya and bounds the city from north-west, distance being 4 kms from Rāmśilā in west. This is also a *śrāddha* site where oblations are made to Pretrāja or Yama. There are several images of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Mahiṣāsuramardinī, Umā-Maheśvara, Gaṇeśa *et al.* But the most notable is Andhakāsura vadha *mūrti* of Śiva, belonging to the Pāla age. In this image the deity has eight arms in two of which he holds a *triśūla*, at the end of which is pinned the body of Andhakāsura. In other hands he is holding *ḍamaru, parśu, ghaṇṭa, khaḍaga,* while one hand is in *tarjanī mudrā*. The godess Yogeśvarī, sqatting on the ground, holds in her hand a cup in which she catches the blood dropping down from the body of Andhakāsura[50]. This image is unique from the point of view of that it is perhaps solitary example of this form of Śiva image from the region.

THE EPILOGUE:

Since a religion physically manifests itself boldly through art and artitecture, the above evidences and arguments are sufficient to project Gaya as a potential center of Saivism and its alien aspects. No serious attempt so far has been made to properly explore the different horizons of *Śaiva* cult in the region. This article is just a prelude and the need is of a systematic study of Śaivism and its different aspects on the land of Brahmā for being *pitāmaha* of ancestor worship or *śrāddha*, Viṣṇu and Buddha.

References

1. By *Gayā kśetra* or Gaya Region I mean the sacred complex of Gaya or the widest circuit of Gaya pilgrimage, which according to the *Purāṇas* is five *krośas* in extent, and all the *tīrthas* associated with the name of Gaya lie within this geographical extension of five *krośas (Vāyu Purāṇa, 105.72,)*. It extends towards north as far at least as Pretśilā or Pretkūṭa (*Vāyu P.*- 108. 67-69) and towards south as far at least as the sacred Bo-tree at BodhGaya (*Vayu P.*-111.26-27). The distance between Pretśilā and Bo-tree is approximately ten miles which agrees to the statement of *Vāhu Purāṇa* mentioning it in *krośa* or *kos*. The same extension of *Gayā kṣetra* is held by *Agni* and *Garuḍa Purāṇas* too.

Vāyu Purāṇa (Poona: Anandasrama Sanskrit Series, 1905)

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2. *Pitṛtīrthaṁ Gayā nāma sarva tīrthaṁ varaṁ śubham* (*Matsya Purāṇa* - 22.2)

   Matsya Purāṇa, Bombay : Khemraja Srikrishnadas, Stream Press, Śaka 1845.

3. R.K. Choudhary: *The Vratyas in Ancient India,* Varanasi: 1954, p. 36 & 141.

4. The Vedic Āryans regarded Brahmā as Prajāpati and his worship was a short of veneration to forefathers. It picked the *śrāddha* cult of Asuras and when did it occur it is very difficult to ascertain. However, *vedīs* (sacred sites) associated with Brahmā may be taken as the oldest Aryan *vedīs*. The *vedīs* associated with Śiva and Śakti fall on the line of demarcation of non-Āryans and Āryans, or in other words they may be said to belong to the transition phaes of Aryanisation of the land. The antiquity of Sun and Yama *vedīs* lie close to the Brahmā *vedis* as they are important Vedic entities. The sites of Viṣṇu and his *avatāras* like Rāma, Buddha and others mark the final addition to the list of *vedīs*.

5. B.M. Barua: *Gaya and Buddha-Gaya,* Vol.I, Calcutta: Chuckervertty Chatterjee & Co. Ltd., 1931, p.154.

6. *Vinaya, Mahāvagga*-I. IX, *Sacred Book of the East Series* (further *SBE*), Vol. XIII-*Vinaya Texts,* part I, Translated from Pali by T.W. Rhys Davids and H.Oldenberg, Delhi et al : Motilal Banarsidass, reprint 1982.

7. *Vinaya, Mahāvagga,* I.XV-XVI, op.cit.

8. D.C. Sircar: *"Vaisnavism"* (part-D, chapter XIX: Religion and Philosophy), *The Age of Imperial Unity*, Ed. R.C. Majumdar and A.D. Pusalkar, Bombay: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 2nd edn. 1953, 432-33.

9. Ibid. p.434.

10. Ibid.

11. Arvind Mahajan: *"Srāddha tīrtha Gayā as depicted in the North Indian epigraphs", Rays and Ways of Indian Culture,* Ed. D.P. Dubey, New Delhi: M.D. Publications, 1996, pp.31-38.

12. B.M. Barau: op.cit., pp.219-20.

13. Samuel Beal: *Si-Yu-ki: Buddhist Record of the Western World (English translation of the travels of Hiuen Tsiang),* New Delhi: Orienttal Books reprint Corporation, 1969, Two Volumes bound in one, Vol. II, pp.115-27.

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14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., pp.121-22.

16. B.M. Barua: op.cit., pp.230-38

17. Francis Buchanan: *An Account of the Districts of Bihār and Patna in 1811-1812,* Patna: Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Not dated, Vol.I, p.120.

18. Ibid., p. 117; Cuningham identifies this Ban Rāja with Balban - the Turki emperor of Delhi. He makes this contention on the basis of an inscription of *saṁvat* 1325 (A.D. 1268), on a slab in the north-west of Viṣṇupad. Alexander Cuningham: *Archaeological Survey of India* (further *ASI*), *Report for the year 1871-72,* Vol.III, Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1873, pp.127-28.

19. Ibid. (Buchanan)

20. *Vāyu Purāṇa,* 111.22

21. The Pratihāra king whose known dates are 893 and 907 A.D. R.C. Majumdar: *Ancient India,* Delhi et al: Motilal Banarsidass, 8th edn. 1977, p. 287.

22. A. Cuningham: *ASI Report,* Vol. I, Delhi & Varanasi: Indological Book House, reprint 1972, p.4.

    The inscription is `*saṁvat 8: Śrī Mahendrapāla rājye*' on a bas relief *Daśāvatāra* panel.

    A. Cuningham : *ASI Report,* 1871-72, Vol. III, op.cit., p.123; R.K. Choudhary: *Select Inscriptions of Bihar,* Patna: 1958, p.15.

23. *List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal,* Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Press, 1896, p.282

24. *Vāyu Purāṇa,* 109.44

25. B.M. Barua: op.cit., p.20

26. A. Cuningham *ASI Report,* Vol. III, op.cit., p.111,127

27. I contend on the ground that relying upon the material, of which the temple is built, it is very difficult, rather impossible to fix its antiquity. Root of this problem lies in the fact that the temple sites never die, but are kept alive by its votaries by any means. It happens that when a portion of temple falls, it is readily repaired by the material of the time. After hundred years

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or so when another portion falls, it also gets repaired by the materials available in that period. In course of frequent repairs, it happens that the entire original materials get replaced by materials belonging to different phases, but however one can mark the relics of original construction, particularly in the sanctum sanctorum. More often the original plan also is maintained and on the basis of plan the date of the temple can be fixed. In case of a thoroughly repaired temple, one will have to go in literatures to find its antiquity. There are several such cases in Gaya region, more often with the Śiva temples.

28. Patna Museum, Art no. 2614

29. Arvind Mahajan: op.cit.

30. J.N. Banerjee: *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1956, p.478, 574.

31. Radha Krishna Choudhary: "*Gaya through the Ages*", *Glories of Gaya* - Souvenir of the 42nd Indian History Congress, Ed. U. Thakur and others, Bodh Gaya: Magadh University, 1981, pp.10-11.

32. A. Cuningham: *ASI Report,* Vol.I, op.cit., p.3

33. Murari Pathak: *"Pauranik Geography of Gaya"*, Transactions of the Indian Council of Geographers, Patna-1968.

34. Mathura Mohan Chakravarty: "*A Religious study of Gaya*", *Glories of Gaya,* op.cit., p.44

35. A pre-Prapitāmaheśvara temple and this contention is based on the treatment of pillars, spire *et al* which is very simple.

36. *Vāyu Purāṇa,* 112.57;

Agni Purāṇa, 116.11, Ed. Rajendra Lal Mitra, Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873, 3 Vols.

37. A. Cuningham: *ASI Report,* Vol. I, op.cit., p.4

38. D.R. Patil : *The Antiquarian Remains of Bihar,* Patna: Kasi Prasad Jayswal Research Institute, 1963, p. 139.

39. Lalita Prasad Vidyarthi: *Uttara Bharat ka ek sanskritik nagar Gaya,* Patna: Bihar Hindi Granth Akademi, 1971, p.188.

40. *Vāyu Purāṇa,* 112.34, 109.24

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41. Ibid., 108.62

42. Ibid., 109. 20-24, 111.26, 112.58.

43. *Agni Purāṇa*, 106. 1-16

44. B.M. Barau : op.cit., p.230

45. Ibid., pp.229-232

46. cf. Balindra lal Das: *A Hindu point of view on Bodh Gaya - with some reference to the Bill regarding the same pending in Assembly,* Calcutta: Published by the Author, 2nd edn. 1936, p.12

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., p.13

49. *List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal,* op.cit., pp. 291-92.

50. T.A. Gopinatha Rao: *Elements of Hindu Iconography,* Madras: The Law Printing House, 1916, Vol.I-Part II, pp.379-82; Vol. II - Part I, pp.192-194.

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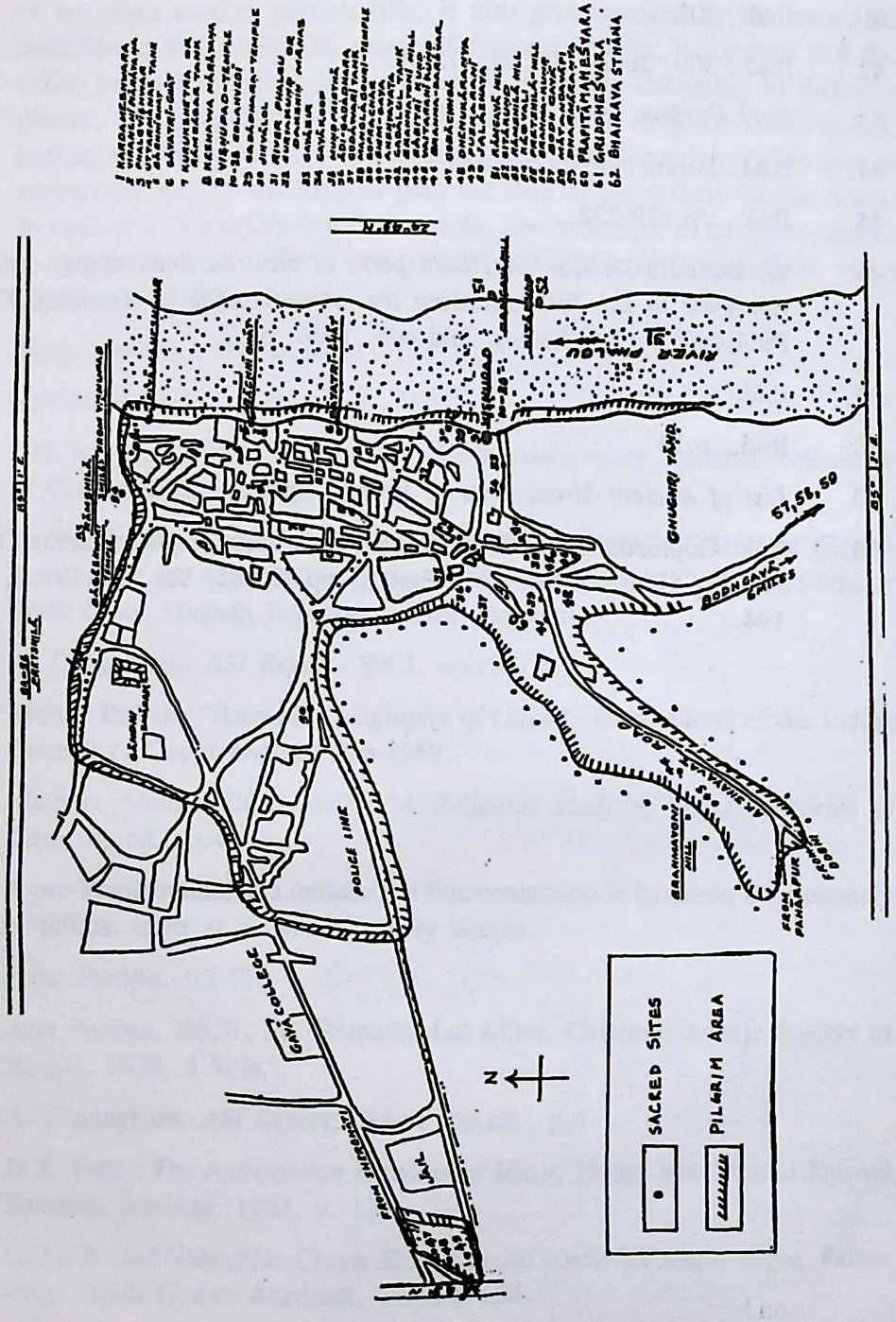
IMPORTANT SACRED SITES OF THE GAYA



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10

SVĀBHIṢEKAMŪRTI, A RARE IMAGE OF ŚIVA

*S.N. Shivarudraswamy**

One of the oldest and also the most widely spread cult in India is that of Śiva. He is the prominent one among the Hindu Triad as the god of destruction. The worship of Śiva was started as early as Indus Valley Civilization. There, he was depicted as the lord of animals or Pauśupati. The Ṛigveda, the *Vājasaneyi-samhitā,* the *Śveta yajurveda,* the *Atharvaṇaveda* dealt with Śiva as synonym of Rudra.[1] He is also called by various names such as Mahādeva, Maheśvera, Rudra, Durjati, Nīlakaṅtha, Sithkaṅtha, Triṇetra, etc. Śivalīlās (sports of Śiva) and various forms of the god that are described in the epics and *purāṇas, vēdic* and *āgamic* literature provide the topic and background for the delineation of Śaiva sculptures. The images of Śiva are available in wide multiples. Generally, Śiva is depicted in both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples as Liṅgas. Besides it, the other forms of Siva such as Liṅgodbhavamūrti, Caṅdraśekhara, Umāmaheśvara, *saṁhāramūrtis* such as Kāmāṅtakamūrti, Gajāhāmūrti, Kalārimūrti, Tripurāṅtaka, Bhairava, Vīrabhadra, Jālandharahāra, Kaṅkala and Bhikṣaṭanāmūrti etc., ferocious forms such as Āghoramūrti, Mahākāla etc. *anugrahamurtis* such as Caṅḍeśānugraha, Viṣṇuanugraha (Cakradana), Kīrātarjunia etc. and other forms such as Gaṅgādharamūrti, Ardhanārīśvara, Haryārdha, etc., are depicted in Indian temples. These various forms of Śiva are found in all periods of the ruling dynasties of Karnataka. A very rare form of Śiva known as SVĀBHIṢĒKAMŪRTI is discovered by me during hte course of the my field work.

Background for assuming this form (Svābhiṣekamūrti) is given in Pūrvakāraṇāgama[2], which is an unpublished āgamic work. Śiva is a great *yōgi* and a performer of *tapas*. After performing *tapas,* (penance), Śiva pours auspicious water on himself. The Svābhiṣekamūrti is found in two or three places of Karnataka

* Professor, P.A. College, Tiptoor, Karnataka.

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namely Thimmalapura in Harapanahalli Taluk of Bellary district and Nandi in Chikkaballapura Taluk of Kolar district.

There is a three-celled Śiva temple at Timmalapura, which is a Vijayanagara structure. On a column of the *raṅgamaṇṭapa* (rangamandapa) of this temple, the image of the Svābhiṣēkamūrti is depicted. (See fig.) The god is shown seated in *padmāsana* on a pedestal wearing *kirīṭa, makarakuṇḍala* and *cakrakuṇḍala, hāra, rudrākṣimāla,* armlets, bracelets, anklets and a long garland of flower which touches the pedestal. Possessing six hands, he carries in his front two hands a pot filled with sacred water placing in the middle of his crossed laps, other two hands carry two vessels filled with same water. He pours the sacred water on himself from two vessels carried in the two upper hands. This is the only temple which has this image in entire region of Hampi.

Bhoganandi Temple at Nandi is a Gaṅga-Nolamba monument, and it was extended during the Vijayanagara empire by adding a *mahāraṅgamaṇṭapa*. On one of the columns of this additional structure, the image of the god is delineated. In this instances, the god is shown seated in *padmāsana* carrying in his upper hands two vessels filled with auspicious water. In other two hands, he holds another vessel filled with auspicious water keeping on his laps. Though the deity is the reminiscent of Dhanvantri, who is one of the minor incarnations of Viṣṇu, this cannot be Dhanvantri. Dhanvantri is sometimes delineated as having two hands, one of which carries a pot full of ambrosia. Normally Dhanvantri is shown possessing four or six hands, carrying a pot filled with ambrosia in one of the hands and Vaiṣṇava attributes such as *śaṅkha, cakra* etc. The images depicted in these two temples ar. not Dhanvantri. The depiction of Svābhiṣekamūrti in these two instances is according to the ideas furnished in the *Pūrvakāraṇāgama.*

Svābhiṣekamūrti can be seen in the *śālakōṣṭha* of the parapet of Narasimha temple of 18th century at Sibi in Tumkur district. The god is delineated in same manner as shown above but he is shown seated on a tiger. It is a fancy of the artists who made it.

Svābhiṣekamūrti is a rare form of Śiva and this is not popular also. Most of the ancient iconographic texts do not furnish information about this form except, for the *Pūrvakārṇāgama.* The Śiva temple of Timmalapura was constructed by Bayakāra Rāmappa.[3] He was also known as Rāmāmātya, who was a great scholar of music. He occupied a commandable position in the Vijayanagara court. King Acyutarāya appointed him as governor of Kondavidu and he also won the favour of *Aḷiya* Ramaraya.[4] As stated earlier, the *mahārangamaṇṭapa* of the temple at Nandi also belonges to the Vijayanagara period.

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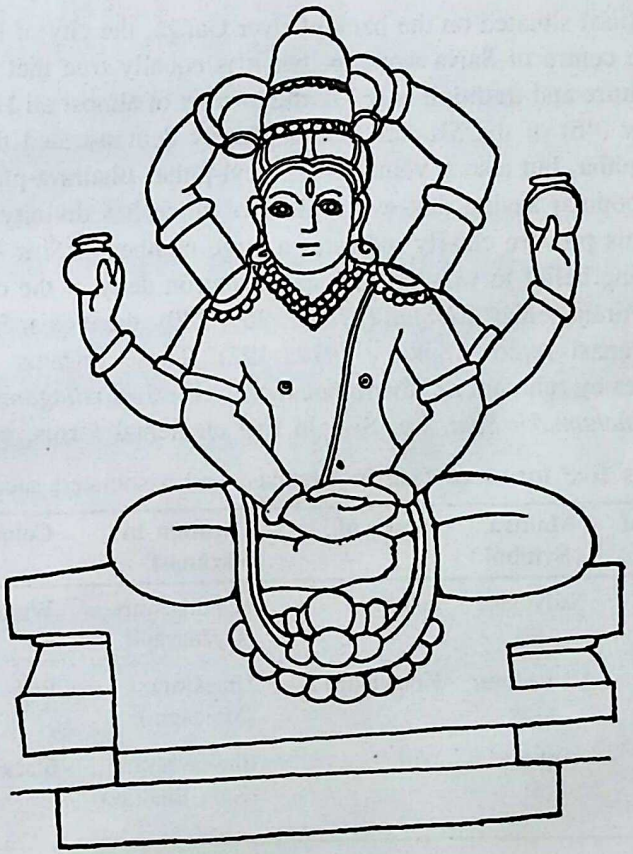
1. T.A., Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconographuy* Vol. II, Pt., i, p.39.

2. Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao conveyed this information in my personal discussion with him. I am grateful to him for this.

3. *ARSIE.*, 1918, 302: *ARSIE.*, 1914, 464 & *SII.*, IX Pt. ii, 682.

4. '*SVARAMELAKALANIDHI*' of Ramamatya, (Ed). M.S. Ramaswami Aiyar, 1932, p. XIV, & No. 15, 16, 27, 31-33.



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11

ŚIVA AS BHAIRAVA WORSHIPPED IN VĀRĀNASĪ

*Bhanu Agrawal**

Vārānasī situated on the bank of river Gaṅgā, the city of Bābā Viśwanātha, has been the centre of Śaiva worship, but it is equally true that in the true spirit of Indian culture and tradition is has nurtured cults of almost all Hindu deities. The *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* (46) of the *Skaṅda Purāṇa* clearly demonstrated that Kāśī was not only a Śiva-pītha, but also a Viṣṇu-pītha, Devī-pītha, Bhairava-pītha, Āditya-pītha, etc. It is a popular saying that every piece of stone has divinity of Śiva in Kāśī/ Vārānasī. This proverb clearly indicates a large number of *Śiva lingams*, and also people's strong belief to worship Śiva as the patron deity of the city. According to the Skaṅda Purāṇa - *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* (97.261, 269, 280), there exist 511 `Śiva lingams' in the Vārānasī region (Sukul[2], 1977: 122). These lingams are classified in different types by scholars i.e. *Svayaṁbhuva,* twelve *Jyotir-lingams* (light-reflecting lingams), *Pañchamukh Śiva,* i.e. Śiva in five elemental forms, etc.

Śiva's five forms of face in Vārānasī and associated sacred qualities.

Śiva's form of face	Mantra/ Symbol	Power of	Location in Vārānasi	Colour	Element
Nandī (his vehicle)	Sadyojāta/ *na*	action	Nandikeśvara (Gyānavāpi)	White	Earth
Umā (his consort)	Vāmadeva/ *maḥ*	Knowledge	Umeśvara (Maidāgin)	Red	Water
Bhairava	Aghora/ *Śi*	Will	Bhaireveśvara (Kāla Bhairava)	Black	Fire

* Senior Lecturer, History of Art, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005

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Mahādeva	Tatpuruṣa/ *Vā*	Origine	Mahākāleśvara (Dārā Nagar)	Yellow	Air
Sadāśiva	Īsāna/ *Ya*	Supremacy	Iśāneśvara (Kotawālpurā)	Crystal	Ether *(Ākāṣa)*

In 'Sadāśiva' image (five headed Śiva) one head of Bhairava (*Aghora*) is also represented. In the mantra (Om) *Namaḥ Śivāya, Pañchākshara Mantra* there are five forms of Śiva which is worshipped by the worshiper. A beautiful Bhairava's head is also represented in *trimukh* (Trimurti) Śiva in Elephantā Cave. Bhairava is the *Aghora* or terrifying aspect of Śiva or Rudra. Sixty four forms of Bhairava are described in Śaivāgamas. Bhairava's iconographic forms are also described in *Rūpamaṇdana* and *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*. According to Rūpamaṇdana, Śiva as Bhairava should have eight hands, and he holds the sword, *pāśa, śūla, damarū, kapāla* (Severed head), snake and one hand in *abhayamudrā*. According to Viṣ ṇudharmottara Purāṇa, Bhairava is described like this:-

लम्बोदरं तया कुर्याद्वृत्तपिंगल लोचनम् ।
दंष्ट्राकरालवदनं फुल्लनासापुटम् तथा ॥

कपाल मालिनं रौद्रं सर्वतः सर्पभूषणम् ।
व्यालेन त्रासयन्तं च देवी पर्वतनन्दिनीम् ॥

सजालम्बुदसंकाशं गजचर्मोत्तरच्छदम् ।
बाहुभिर्बहुभिर्व्याप्तं सर्वायुध विभूषणैः ॥

वृहत्सालप्रतीका शैस्तथा तीक्ष्ण नखैः शुभैः ।
साचीकृतमिदं रूपं भैरवस्य प्रकीर्तितम् ॥

वि॰ध॰पु॰ (59/1/4)

Various types of Bhairavamūrtis are described by Gopinath Rao in his book[3]. J.N. Banerjee[4] also described a beautiful Baṭuka Bhairavamūrti of Banaras. He said that "four - armed figure of Baṭuka Bhairava is accompanied by a dog (Fig. 1). The youthful god wearing a skull-garland and a skull-girdle advances to left with his dog licking at the severed head held by his front right hand, his three other hands holding a sword, a bell and a trident." The artist's attempt was to emphasise the terrific aspect of the god. This very late sculpture hailing from Banaras has got a character of its own.

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Bhairava, terrifying aspect of Śiva, is the god of transgression per excellence, for he appears only to cut off the fifth head of Brahmā (Myth in Skaṅda Purāṇa, Kāṣī Khaṇḍa, Ch. 30 and also in Vārāha Purāṇa & Kūrma Purāṇa) and that head stuck in a hand of Śiva. Brahminicide being the most heinous crime in the Hindu tradition, yet Bhairava's example was ritually imitated by the gruesome Kāpālika ascetics, who still have their successors in the modern Aghoris and Nāths[5], who have greatly contributed to the spread of his cult.

Bhairava is the typical protector of guardian of territorial limits (*Kshetrapāla*) for more socio-centrally located pure divinities like Viśvanātha in Kāśī and also functions as door-keeper (*dvārapāla*) at the temples of such, even Jaina divinities. Śiva as Bhairava presented as door-keeper (*dvārapāla*), is very common in South Indian temples[6].

There are three basic iconographic representations of Bhairava which is derived from this myth: (1) as *Brahmaśiraśchhedaka,* he grasps by its hair the severed head whose dripping blood is greedily lapped up by his dog; (2) as *Kaṅkālamūrti* spearing a man or already bearing the latter's corpse (or skeleton) on his shoulder. In both cases, he is either naked or wearing a tiger or elephant skin, a garland of human skulls, snakes around his neck and arms, and is grotesque with dark-skin and two *monstrous fangs*. (3) In the milder *Bhikshāṭanamūrti*, he is depicted in a human like form roaming to beg for alms. He is also show naked, wearing wooden sandal (*Kharāun*), holding a severed head and with a dog. This form is specially popular in South India.

About all 64 Bhairavas image are in Vārānasī and he has been worshipped in the city since ancient time. But in modern period eight Bhairavas (*aṣṭabhairavas*) are most famous. The independant temple of Kāla Bhairava, an attendant of Śiva, popularly known as *Bhaironāth* (situated between Chaukhambhā and Maidāgin Post Office, Vārānasi) is *Kotawāl* or Chief Policeman - Magistrate and protector of Kāśi, and also a heinous criminal divinity adored especialy by anti-social ascetics who flagrantly transgressed even the most fundamental socio-religious norms and rules. Generally, Viṣṇu is the protector of *Trailokya* and Yamarāja punishes the people. But Śiva protects the people in Kāśī and Bhairava punishes the people. The *Danda* of Yamarāja can be bearable punishment, but Bhairava's Danda is thirty two times much more painful and unbearable. For a *Kotawāl* is expected to punish criminals for their sins, Bhairava has devoured the sins of his devotee or pilgrims so much so that one of his title is `Sin-Eater' (*Pāpabhakshaka*). Here in Kāśī the place called *Kapālamochana* comes to symbolize the power to make sins fall away, for here `Where the Skull of Brahmā Fell' the worst of sins was shed.

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The temple of Kāla Bhairava (Fig. 2) itself was, according to the Kāśī-Khaṇḍa (Skaṅda Purāṇa, 31.138), located on the banks of the Kapālamochana tīrtha, in the Omkāreśvara are north of Maidāgin. 'Bhairava stands right there', says the text, facing Kapālamochana tīrtha, devouring the accumulated sins of devotees. According to the legends, Bhairava becomes *Kotawāl* of Kāśī only after he has purified himself from the crime of brahminicide at Kapālamochana. After becoming Kotawāl of Kāśī by Viśvanātha, Kāśī appeared to him as a huge Śivalinga (*Jyotirlinga*) and, not knowing where to go, then he decided to take a dog as his vehicle and the dog guided him.

According to Kuber Nath Sukul, Kāla Bhairava temple was reconstructed in its present location in the thirteenth century, when the shrines in the Omkāreśvare sector were destroyed during the Muslim conquest. The Kāla Bhairava's silver mask garlanded with flowers, seated upon a dog, holding a trident - the image is completely covered by an apron.

Though Kāla Bhairava is the most important and central among them, he is not counted among the eight traditional Bhairavas, (described in `Bhairavāshṭaka' or 'Bhairava - Tantra'), i.e. Rūrū (Fig. 3), Chaṇḍa, Asitāṅga, Kapāla (Lāṭa Bhairava; Fig. 4), Krodhan (Ādi Bhairava), Unmatta (Fig. 5), Saṁhāra, Bhīṣaṇa (Bhūta Bhairava; Fig. 6) Bhairava, - roughly eight different directions of the holy city Vārānasi to whom he has relegated his function of Kotwāl.

Eight Traditional Bhairavas:

Name of Bhairava	Protecting Diśā (direction) or Kshetra	Temple place in Vārānasī/Kāśī	Rūpa or form
1. Rūrū (The Dog)	South-East	Hanumāna Ghāt	Beautiful moustached and hair bearing the creascent moon, seated on a dog, wears elephant-skin, large earing and serpents as ornament, skull-garland, scorpions on arms.
2. Chaṇḍa (The Fierce)	South	In the Durgā Temple at Durgā Kuṇḍa	Black image, holds a Daṇḍa and Damarū (drum), dog as vehicle.
3. Asitāṅga (The Black limbed)	East	In a niche in the Vṛddhakāleśvara temple near the well of nectar (Amṛtakūpa)	Form is not clear.

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4. Kapāla (the Skull bearer)	North-West	In Lāṭa Bhairava near Alaipurā	Skull on a ten foot high pillar or Bhairavās Lāṭa.
5. Krodhan (The Wrathful)	South-West	Within the sanctum of the Baṭuka Bhairava temple at Kamacchā, famous name is *Ādi Bhairava*.	Black image with dog as vehicle.
6. Unmatta (the Mad)	West	In a small shrine at the village of Deurahana on the Pañchakroshi road between Kardameśvara and Bhimachaṇḍī	Smilling face, Jaṭā-Jūṭa, wearing earing & garland or Rudrāksha, holding some fruit with his both hands on chest, Ūrdhvaretas (erect penis), like Lakulīśa-Śiva, legs are in dancing pose.
7. Saṁhāra (The Destroyer)	North-East	A small temple near Pātan Darvāzā in Gāya Ghāt.	Black image, dog as vehicle.
8. Bhīṣaṇa (The Terrible)	North	In Nakhāsa near Lohatiā, famous name is *Bhūta Bhairava*	Large smiling face with commanding moustache, accompanied by his dog.

Now-a-days, *Lāṭa Bhairava* is identified with the Purāṇic Kapāla Bhairava. The pillar (Lāṭa), now only a ten-feet high stump encased in copper sheeting and smeared in vermillion, is standing in Ādampurā area on the northern fringe of Vārānasī. In the myth criminal Kāpālika Bhairava, was forced to wandering as a begger for twelve years, bearing skull of Brahmā in one hand and the club in the other, or with the skull mounted on the staff (Daṇḍa) itself (Khaṭvāṅga). This was the punishment of Bhairava (Brahmahatyā daṇḍa), whose dispensation is an important part of Bhairava's function in the Vārānasi city. The Lāṭa Bhairava, beside the Kapālamochana Tirth, where the Kāpālika-Bhairava was freed of his heinous crime, that this intense suffering is undergone. Kapāla Bhairava is the "Sin-eater" (*Pāpabhakshaka*) of his devotee of Kāśī. So the devotee need not tremble with fear of Yamarāja or death. Kāśī. So the devotee need not tremble with fear of Yamarāja or death. Kāśī is in the jurisdiction of Bhairava, not in the Yama. Bhairava conquers Death in Kāśī. Kāśī is, the Mahāśmaśāna or "Great cremation ground of the entire Universe", where every pious Hindus wishes to die, is the only city from which the God of Death (Yama) is himself excluded.

Apart from the above classical or traditional eight Bhairavas, there are several images of Bhairava scattered all round the city, i.e. Baṭuka Bhairava, Āsa Bhairava, Ānanda Bhairava, Daṇḍa Bhairava, Daṇḍapāṇi Bhairava, Cakrapāṇi

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Bhairava, Dvārapāla Bhairava, Kshetrapāla Bhairava (situated inside the Kotawālī Police Station), etc. They are either in open-air or housed in small temples or in subsidiary position in the temple of some other deity. These temples often also shelter images of Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Kālī and Hanumān. Very often he is simply shown as an amorphous stone (without regular shape stone) heavily smeared with vermillion (*Sindūra*), it is popular way of warship of Bhairava in the villages or tribal areas. These Bhairavas are protecting Kāśi Kshetra (region) with his Gaṇas (or Bīras), i.e. Daitrābīra, Lahurābīra, Bhojūbīra, Brahmabīra, Karamanabīra, Mānikabīra, Bullābīra, Daundiābīra, etc. There are fifty two Bīra in Kāśi.

The roughly distribution of Bhairava temples, among the eight divisions of modern Vārānasi, is given below. This division into wards was done by the city corporation in the 19th Century.

1.	Ādampurā	-	Lāṭa-Bhairava or Kapāla (Kapardi) Bhairava.
2.	Bhelūpurā	-	Rūrū, Krodhana, Baṭuka, Ādi and Chaṇḍa Bhairava.
3.	Chetganj	-	Bhūta (or Bhīṣaṇa) Bhairava
4.	Chowk	-	Āsa Bhairava
5.	Daśāśvamedh	-	Ānanda (Mirghāt), Saṁhāra, Dvārapāla Bhairava (inside Viśvanāth temple)
6.	Jaitapurā	-	Ānanda Bhairava (in front of Saṅkatā Mātā)
7.	Kotawāli	-	Kāla, Asitāṅga, Saṁhāra, Kshetrapāla Bhairava
8.	Cantt or Sikaraula	-	?

Laṅkā, Sāranātha and Śivapura divisions (Thānā) are very late additions.

The official Kotawāl is incharge of eight stations (thānā) just as Kāla Bhairava is incharge of the *Aṣṭabhairava* temples. Just as Bhairava controls the entire city of Vārānasī from eight different places, so do the police today control the city from eight police stations located above places.

Actually, Vārānasī is situated in the Pañchakroshī-parikramā-path which is in all four directions - East, West, North, South, and all Bhairava images are in these area. The devotee or pilgrims who enter in the Pañchakroshī-parikramā-path in Vārānasi, Bhairava (Śiva) gets them relieved from all sins (*Pāpa*) and gives salvation (*Moksha*).

Bhairava worship is definitely older than eighteenth century. The numerous Bhairava temples are in Vārānasī and also some of his images are on the *ghāt* and

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akhāḍā. The arbitrary growth of the numerous Bhairava temples is nevertheless governed and shaped by a preconceived thelogical system based on the number eight (or sixty-four = eight times eight in Śaivāgama) is revealed by the fact that the most important pilgrimage sequence during the month of Mārgaśīrsha (Nov./ Dec.) is during its first eight days when each of the *ashṭabhairava* is visited in turn and in the order of enumeration above; each Bhairava being visited on a different day. The celebratin of Kāla Bhairava, the city's guardian, as the climax of this sequence on *Bhairavāshṭamī*.

In Kāśī an interesting celebration of marriage of Lāṭa Bhairava is always celebrated during the full-moon of the month of Bhādrapada (Aug./Sept.). The annual wedding ceremonies between Lāṭa-Bhairava and the adjoining well, is celebrated by the people very richly. The marriage is symbolized by the linking of the Lāṭa Bhairava (bride-groom) and bride called "Bharata's well" (*Bharata-Kūpa*) through a slender cord (*nārā*) tied to both. This celebration did not have any historical evidence. It is started in twentieth century by the worshippers.

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5. Nāth cult was developed by Gorakhanāth, Macchendranāth, etc. in India and Nepal. Kathmāndu Valley of Nepal is also famous for worship of Bhairava and their consort Bhairavī. There are many Bhairava's, i.e. huge Unmatta Bhairava (erected linga) in the Paśupatināth temple, Uttuṇga Bhairava, Ākāśa Bhairava, Rakta Bhairava, Śveta Bhairava, Nīla Bhairava, Pīta Bhairava, Kāla Bhairava, etc.

6. In Hoyasaleśvara temple (Halebid, Mysore), Bṛihadīśvara temple (Tanjour), etc., there are Bhairava represented as a door-keeper (dvārapāla).

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FIG - 1
BAṬUKA BHAIRAVA.

FIG - 2
KĀLA BHAIRAVA.

FIG - 3
RŪRŪ BHAIRAVA.

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FIG - 4
KAPĀLA (LĀṬA) BHAIRAVA

FIG - 5
UNMATTA BHAIRAVA

FIG - 6
BHĪṢAṆA (BHŪTA) BHAIRAVA

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12

BHIKSHĀṬANAMŪRTI IN SOUTH INDIAN ART (with special reference to Vijayanagara period)

*D. Kiran Kranth Choudhary**

The Bhikshāṭanamūrti form of Śiva is popular in South Indian art and extremely rare in North Indian context. In South Indian art, the Cola sculptors evinced much interest and produced superb reliefs. The Colas left a long lasting impact which was felt by their successors, like the Vijayanagaras. However, the Viajayanagara sculptors introduced certain features to make the Bhikshāṭana form more attractive in spite of their adherence to the rules of the *Śilpa* texts. Hence it is attempted in the following lines to make a comparative study of the Bhikshāṭ anamūrti of the Viajayanagara period with its earlier counterparts. The mythological background of the Bhikshāṭanamūrti aspect is known from the *Vāmana Purāṇa, Kūrma Purāṇa* and the *Liṅga Purāṇa* though with a slight variation.[1] The iconographical features of the Bhikshāṭanamūrti are found in the *Aṁśumadbhēdāgama, Uttarakāmikāgam, Śilparatna, Kāranāgama, Ajitāgama* and *Suprabhedāgama,* etc.[2]

Many excellent examples illustrating Bhikshāṭanamūrti aspect of Śiva belonging to the Vijayanagara period are found at Srikalahasti, Tadiparti, Penugonda, Srisailam, Chandragiri, Pushapagiri, Vallur and Lepakshi. (Plate - 27)

A careful observation of these sculptures enables us to notice the following iconographical features that are found the Bhikshāṭanamūrti forms of the Vijayanagara period.

In all the sculptures, Śiva is shown we aring either *ardhoruka* or *Pūrṅoruka* (very rarely without dress, which was a common feature in the earlier periods).

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* Associate Professor, Dept. of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati - 517 502. Andhra Pradesh, India.

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Śiva is represented standing with his left leg firmly planted on the ground. The right leg is slightly bent at knee with raised heel and shown forward to suggest that deity is in walking posture. He invariably wears *pādukas*.

Bhikshāṭanamūrti is shown with four hands. A *triśūla* either decorated with peacock feathers or without them, is generally shown arranged horizontally on the shoulders of the deity. The upper left hand carries another *triśūla*. But in example from Chandragiri, Śiva holds the trident with two of his upper hands. In the Tadiparti and Srikalahasti reliefs the deity holds *triśūla* and *parasu,* but *damaru* in the case of Lepakshi, in the upper right and left hands respectively. Śiva feeds the *mṛga* and holds a *kapāla* with his lower right and left hands. But in some cases it is reversed.

In most of hte cases the dwarf stands to the left of the god, carrying a begging bowl on his head. In one of the examples from the Srikalahasti the left hand of Śiva is touching the bowl. It is very interesting to notice that the Bhikshāṭ anamūrti relief found on the eastern *Prākara* wall of the Mallikārjuna temple at Srisailam, two dwarfs are shown to the left of Śiva and they are blowing calrious.

Another important feature that is observed in the Bhikshāṭana forms of the period in question is the representation of *munipatnis*. In one of the sculptures found at Srikalahasti, a *munipatni* is present to the right of Śiva. She is standing with her right hand resting on her thigh, whereas, the left one is raised upwadrs. In the other example found at Chandragiri, a woman is shown placing something in the out stretched lower left hand of the deity. In the Srisailam panel, four *munipatnis* are represented. In all these cases their *saris* are slipping from loins. Yet another example from Srisailam *munis* and *munipatnis,* with Śiva in the act of begging and trees suggesting Daruvana, are represented. A lovely painting representing Śiva as Bhikshāṭanamūrti is found at Lepakshi.[3] Its iconographical features are similar to those of the other panels of Bhikshāṭanamūrti of the Vijayanagara period. Interestingly in the example of Chandragiri, *chhatra* is shown held over Bhikshāṭanamūrthi by a *gana*.

Now, let us examine the iconographic features of Bhikshāṭanamūrti from the Pallava period onwards and compare them with those of the Vijayanagara period. The Pallava sculptors were the first to represent the Bhikshāṭanamūrti aspect. Two beautiful panels of Bhikshāṭana Śiva are found at Kañchi.[4] In these panels the Pallava artists tried to show the walking movement of the deity. The two armed deity wears a piece of cloth around the waist. *Munipatnis* are shown to the left of Śiva in the act of adoring him or simply standing. The most interesting feature is the representation of a three headed *nāga-triśūla-parasu* and moon on

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either side of Siva's head. It is very interesting to note that in the Pallava reliefs the *mṛga* and the dwarf are absent. Bhikshāṭanamūrti sculptures of the early Cālukyan period are found at Alampur and Satyavolu etc.[5] In these examples the deity is shown standing either in *samabhanga* or *dvibhanga* but the walking movement is absent. *Munipatnis* are shown on either side of the deity and their lower garments are slipping from their waist. In all these sculptures the dwarf and *pādukas* are absent while *mṛga* is shown in one instance.

The Eastern Calukyan reliefs found at Biccavolu show the deity as receiving alms offered by a *munipatni* with the lower right hand.[6] In the panels of Bhikshāṭ anamūrti of later Calukyan temples found at Panagal, Hirahadagalli and other places, the *triśūla* of the deity is not shown as placed horizontally on his shoulders.[7] The dwarf is also absent. More over, in some instances, the deity is shown holding *Khaḍga*. *Munipatnis* are similar to the early Calukyan style.

In the Kalinga style, in the reliefs found at Mukhalingam, Sarapalli and Bhubaneswar etc., Śiva is shown in *tribhaṅga* and his lower right hand is kept in *varada* pose. The other hands are holding *akshamāla, mayūrapincha* and *bhikshāpātra*.[8] In this style also, the *pādukas* and the walking movement are absent as in the Calukyan style.

In the Cola period, as stated earlier, many fine representations are found both in stone and bronze.[9] The significant features of hte form of the Cola period are as follows.[10] Śiva is in almost all the cases represented nude. The sanding posture is shown in such a way to suggest the walking posture to some extent. Normally four armed deity (and rarely two or eight hands) holds *ḍamaru* and *triśūla* in his upper hands. The lower left hand holds *bhikshāpātra* while the lower right feeds *mṛga,* shown on its hind legs and rarely in jumping attitude. He is shown with *pādukas*. The dwarf in majority of the cases stands to the left of the god, carrying a big bowl on his head. Another unique and very interesting feature which we come across in majority of the sculptures, both in bronze and stone, from the middle Cola period onwards is tying of bell below the knee of the right leg of bhikshāṭanamūrti. J.N. Banerjee exaplains its significance. "The big *jatābhāra* on the head, and the bell tied to his right leg should be specially noted here, the latter trait emphasising in a way the belief that the god was outside the pale of orthodox Vedism".[11]

The above discussion leads us to understand that the Vijayanagara sculptors, in majority of the case, literally translated the whole story narrated in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* and followed the iconographic features of the *Kāraṇāgama* and *Ajitāgama*.[12]

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The four handed deity is represented standing with his left leg firmly planted on the ground whereas the right is slightly bent at the knee suggesting the walking posture of the deity. This feature is in accordance with the *Ajitāgama*. Another important feature in the Vijayanagara sculptures is that the *munipatnis* are shown in majority of examples and their *saris* are shown slipping from their loins. Another rare feature found in the Chandragiri example is that not only the moon but also the sun is shown adorning the *jaṭāmakuṭa* of the deity.

Thus the Bhikshāṭanamūrti of the Viajayanagara period very closely follow texts. The principal figure in these panels received the focus of the sculptor. The anatomical features of hte figures are clearly depicted in majority of the cases. In some cases the artist tried to create the local background of the event by depicting trees, etc., The sculptures conform to the law of optics. The main figure and *mṛga* reliefs display movement.

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12. *rasasvetam prasannāsyam kañcitākīrṇamūrdhajam pādukoparivinyasta pādayugamasaroruham tayor vāmetaram kuryāt kṣipyamāṇa supādukam susthitak vāmapādena samabhaṅgasamanvitam daksiṇam hariṇālīḍham anyaḍ ḍamarukam dadhat bhikṣāpātram ca piñcham ca vāmabhage vahatkare nāgamekhala saṁyuktam gaṇanāthena caiva hi*

The *Ajitagama,* Vol.II, 37. VV. 219 b-222.

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13

CONCEPT OF ŚAIVISM AMONGST THE GARO ANIMISTS OF MEGHALAYA

*Julius L.R. Marak**

This paper is an attempt to make comparative study the powers of Śiva, the Hindu or Brahmanical deity with that of Garo deity and its from of worship by the Garo animistsor Songsareks. In this paper attempt will be made to give some of the similar powers of Garo deity and attribute with Śiva. The form of worship performed by the Garo Songsareks are animism in nature and there is neither figurative idols to represent their deity nor temples to worship them. They worship nature by attributing powers to them. Their worship is an primitive form of worship. They attribute some power to any object of nature that they feel it has supernatural power and worship them by offering sacrifices. H.K. Barpujari, in his 'Comprehensive History of Assam', says that Śiva was primarily a Non-Aryan deity and the predominant non-Aryan strain in the eithnic composition of Assam may explain the reason for great popularity among the masses in Assam. The Śiva worship in most of the cases was in phallic form and there was hardly any need for a cult icon.[1]

Sir Edward Gait, in his book, 'the History of Assam' opined that the worship of Śiva was most popular form of religion during the rule of Pusyavarman family although certain monarchs wesh leaning towards Vaisnavism. The Śiva worship was performed according to *Sastric* rites but the Kachari soldiers performed according to the tribal customs. They worshiped Śiva by sacrificing pigs, buffaloes, he-goats, pigeons, ducks and cocks and by offering of rice and liquor. Even today on the occassion of Śiva Caturdasi festival castrated goats are strungled in the precincts of Śiva temples and sacrificed at the altars. Śaivism was even popular during the rule of Ahom kings.[2] The tribal form of worship was prevalent in one way or the other by sacrificing animals and birds. Even today, Garos use to point

* Curator, Meghalaya State Museum, Shillong.

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out the dwelling place of Lord Śiva to a place at Balpakram situated on the mountain rocks. The place is known as "*Mahadev Mandir* or Mahādev-ni Nok" at the source of Mahadeo river. Garo legends say that while Mahādev or Śiva was staying in this place, he saw a Garo girl bathing and washing clothes and was enchanted by her beauty and graceful look whose name was Dipari-Tira or Rupe-chupe and married her. After marriage, Śiva changed her name to Pārvatī and built *Mandir* in this place. A solid mount of rocks in a form of *Mandir* still exists at Balpakram (Now these Balpakram areas have fallen under the Wild Life Sanctuary). Garos believed that Mahādev or Śiva and his wife Rupe-chupe (Pārvatī) still live at Chitmang Hill overlooking the Balpakram Hills. Garos believe that here lives a god almighty who is the giver of human lives and also a god who can cause death to human beings. Chitmang is sacred Hill for the Garos as Śiva and Dipari-Tira live here. Chitmang is also the birth place of 'Goera' the god of thunder and lightning, health and strength. The god 'Goera' can be equated with the Brahmanical god, 'Indra'. When a person die, Garos always pray and mention the god of Chitmang asking his blessings and give peace to the departed soul. Even at the time of natural calamities or sorrows befall on them, they would turn towards Chitmang Hill and pray saying," Grand mother Norimbi-Dikkimbi (Dipari-Tira) save us from sorrow, grand mother look after us, care for us and defend us against all dangers".[3]

J. Dutta, Divisional Forest Officer, Tura in his booklet on Balpakram says that the Royal family of Hindu Kingdom of Mymensing (now Bangladesh) used to visit Balpakram on Elephant's back, camp for few days, meditate, worship Lord Śiva and go back. The evidence of such worship in the area is scattered *Śiva Lingas* and Śiva temple at Moheskola (Rocky formations) where no Hindu population exists except the tribals i.e. the Garos or Mandei. The Chitmang hill is also known to the Hindu population living in the plain areas of Bangladesh and neighbouring Assam as '*Kailāśa.*'[4]

Garos worship and offer sacrifices by killing castrated goats to appease the god, "Susime". Susime is a benevolent god who used to bless good things to mankind. He would cure the lame, restore eyesight, restore hearing to the deaf and cure all kinds of deceases when offered sacrifices. He is also the god who tempts people to do evil. People offer sacrifice by erecting a sacrificial post known as '*Sambasia'*. The blood of sacrificed animal is smeared on the sacrificial post '*Sambasia'* by the priest who is known as '*Kamal*'.

The next god or deity worshiped by the Garos is 'Kalkame'. According to the Garo legends this god Kalkame is the elder brother of Goera, the god of lightning and thunder. This powerful god or deity Kalkame is the giver of life and

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protector of human lives. He is the protector against any harm to be caused by animals, prevent all kinds of deceases, sickness and prevent from all kinds of dangers and protector of territory. Garos used to offer sacrifices by erecting stones in the form of *Liṅga* which is known as *'Kosi'*. The form of worship is known as 'A song Kosi tata or Kalkame krita'.[5]

H.K. Barpujari in his comprehensive History of Assam opines that Śiva was regarded as the guardian of territory and hence the deity 'Kalkame' can be compared with Śiva. He further opines that Śiva was primarily a non-Aryan deity. Śiva was in most cases worshiped in phallic (*Liṅga*) form which is cylindrical shape appearing either singly or in combination with *yonī-pītha*. The deity through a dream directed the king to offer and worship him according to the tribal procedure by offering rice, wine and meat and dancing to the tune of beating drums.[6] Garos also worship the deity known as 'Goera', the god of lightning and thunder by offering sacrifices of pigs, he-goats and cock. Any man who is in prolonged illness and other deceases get well after such sacrifices. Goera used to destroy trees, bamboos, animals and men with his sword which is lightning when he is angry. And to appease his anger, animals shall have to be sacrificed. Goera is known as the god of destruction.

According to Garo tradition, such sacrificial rituals are followed by dancing and merry making with the rhythmic beating of drums and music.

The other deity worshiped by the Garos is known as, 'Saljong' or 'Misi-Saljong'. This deity is also the god who blessed food grains to the mankind and creator of trees, grass and the giver of life, etc. in the world. He is also the god who can bring curse to mankind and bring good and evil to human beings. He is being appeased by sacrificing bulls, pigs, fewls, which is usually performed immediately after the harvest. The performance of social part after the ritual ceremonies are over is known to the Garos as *'Wangala'*. A barren woman who does not bear a child also worship this god *'Susime'* by killing and sacrificing a cow or he-goat as may foretell by the *Kamal* through an act of divination known as *'Sima nia'*. Every sacrifice is followed by feast, dancing and merry making to the rhythmic beating of drums and other musical instruments. Drinking of rice beer is compulsory as the ritual itself is followed by, *'Chu rugala'* (offering of rice beer).

The above deities worship prevalent amongst the Garos as tribal deity can be attributed with the Lord Śiva. Evidence of prevalent worship of Śiva cult also be seen from the excavation report of A.K. Sharma at Baitbari (Wadagokgre, West Garo Hills) who says that many *Śiva Liṅgas* and pedestals (*yonī-pītha*) are still

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lying in the sites. At Pulbari, many *Śiva Liṅgas* beautifully shaped and carved on a small hillock and one of these *Śiva Liṅgas* has been installed at *Sibari Mandir.* Being members of a religion that does not believe in idol worship, the beautiful terracotta images, well carved stone *Śiva Liṅgas* and *yonis,* etc. had no meaning for them and being used in their houses as step stones.[7]

Conclusion :-

The worship of Śiva was very much present in the tribal communities in the form of one or the other. Tribal community do not have idols or images for its worship. The very sacrifices made by sacrificing animals and birds are the tribal ways of worship which the Lord Śiva himself liked.

The merry making is a part of such form of worship. Garos till today continues to worship in the form of tribal deity without any images by attributing powers to any objects.

S. Nagar in his book, 'Indian gods and goddesses' says that Śiva's dwelling place is on the Himalayan mount. '*Kailāśa*'[8]. The mountains that are mythologically connected in Garo Hills are also part of Himalayan region which the Hindus called the mountain, 'Kailāśa'. They depicted Śiva having five heads-symbolising the source of five sacred rivers flowing from mountains. So also, there are five river sources originating from this mountain 'Balpakram' in the south Garo Hills district and they are -

1. Mahadeo river 2. Moheskola river 3. Goneswari river or Rongdi 4. Nava or Kanai river and 5. Chi mite or river god. One mountain serving as sources of five rivers may not be found anywhere. Śiva is also described as a god of destroyer - armed with discus, a sword, a bow and a club but his terrible weapon is trident. So also in the case of '*Goera*' the god of thunder and lightning worshiped by the Garos. The god '*Goera*' is also the god of destruction and power worshiped by the Garos.

Śiva is also the god of fertility. While describing the stone Siva Lingas Nagar says that, "in these, appeared to lie, the belief in the principle of creativity and the desire for abundance of off-springs as well as agricultural produce, multiplication and the saving of the live-stock and fulfilment of the worldly needs".

Śiva is depicted as wearing skin of animals which means Śiva was fond of hunting and could consume meat. He is pleased if the sacrifice is offered to him as tribal traditional worships by killing cows, bulls or goats, etc. The god worshiped by the Garos known as, 'Misi-Saljong' is also the god of fertility, multiplication and so on.

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The powers and the qualities that the Lord Śiva had in different names and shapes, so also the powers and the qualities that the Lord Śiva had can be attributed to the gods worshiped by the Garos (Songsareks) who are animists such as *Misi-Saljong*, *Goera, Kalkame* and *Susime* and so on.

The mood and the nature of worships carried out by different comunities groups and tribes may defer but they worship the same deity in different forms and nomenclature. Garo community worship the above named deities by sacrificing pigs, goats, bulls and fewls followed by feasting and merry making including the consumption of rice-beer during festivals. The worship of Saivism in tribal community by attributing different powers and functions are there although the nature of worship may differ from one community to the other. These traditional forms or worships are dying out with the spread of Christianity whch requires documentation and preservation as well as further research and study.

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(See Plates 28 and 29 at the end of the text)

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14

THE WORSHIP OF ŚIVA AMONG THE BODO-KACHARIS OF ASSAM

*Paramita Das**

The Kacharis are one of the most numerous and widely spread of the tribes on the eastern frontier of India. Though many of them are completely fused into the mass forming the Hindu-Assamese population, they still retain their earlier customs and beliefs.[1] The religious philosophy of the Bodo-Kachari tribe centres round the super power of *'Bathou Barai'* or *'Khoria Barai Maharaja'*. This is analogus to *'Sibrai'* or Śiva of the Hindu Trinity. The *Siju* plant (Euphorbia Splendous) is regarded as representing the *'Bathou'* the supreme deity of adoration. Therefore, every traditional Bodo-Kachari household is seen planting a *Siju* tree along with a sapling of *Jatrasi* and a *tulsi* (basil) in the northern corner of their countryward.[2]

Śiva or *Bathou Bourai* is regarded as the creator of the universe and everything therein. He is known by various names like *Gila Dambra*, *Khoriya Bourai, Sribourai (Sibrai)*. According to Bodo-Kachari myths, two evil deities known as *Luba-Lubini* or *Khuba-Khubini* destroyed the creation of *Sibrai*. But *Sibrai* and his consort *Siburi* manifested themselves in human form on earth, and once again created life.[3] According to the Bodo-Kacharis, Bathou represents the five basic elements called *pañchabhūta*; i.e. earth, air, water, ether and fire, out of which emerged the human body and the entire universe. The propitiation of this deity rests on this basic philosophical idea.[4]

Bathou worship appears to be closely linked with the harvest cycle. In mid May, a special festival known as *'Putuli Haba'* is celebrated. It is a symbolic folk marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī in the form of *Raona-Raoni*. Another annual community festival is the institution of *Kherai*. It is performed in the month of *Kartik* (Oct-

* Department of History, Gauhati University, gauhati.

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Nov), after plantation of the crops. It propitiates *Bathou* along with *Maino* or *Buli Buri*, the goddess of harvest and wealth. The latter is propitiated by the female members who go to the fields decked in white garments. *Maino* is offered two betel leaves, two areca nuts and a single earthen lamp which is lighted. Two men carrying bamboo baskets filled with rice and paddy on their heads, and followed by the women, lead a procession into the household. The grain, which is said to contain the spirit of *Maino* is covered by a white cloth. The rice is stored in the kitchen while the paddy is kept in the *'bhoral'* or granary. *** The propitiatory ritual begins with different dance recitals along with singing of ballads, in tune with the traditional musical instruments like *Kham* (madal, small taals) *Jotha* (taka) and *Siphung* (banhi, a flute). The *Deodhani* who acts as the linkman is believed to be the embodiment of the supreme power or *Bathou* for the time being, and capable of communicating oracles. In a *Kherai*, as many as twenty dance recitals (like *Bagrumba*) are instituted, befitting the temperament of individual deities. At the end of the rituals, a community prayer is offered soliciting pelf, power and health. Homage is also paid to the patrilineal fore-fathers. In fact, the word *Kherai* literally means propitiation of the patrilineal fore-fathers. The Bodo-Kacharis believe that desires expressed on this auspicious moment are fulfilled.

During the *Kherai, Bathou Maharaj* or Śiva is revered as *Khouriya Bourai* and his consort *Khowriya Buri* is identified with Mother Kāmākhyā. The main *Bedī* or seat of worship, as stated earlier, is the Siju tree. Below it is placed a leaf of the plaintain or banana tree. On this is placed a betel leaf, an areca nut and twelve bananas. Incense, frankincense and an earthen lamp are then lighted. This serves as the *āsana* or seat of Bathou. To his left, on the approach road to the Siju tree, are placed, similarly arranged banana leaves to serve as *āsanas* of other Gods and Goddesses of the *Kherai*. To worship *Bathou Maharaj,* a pig is sacrificed. Its blood is drunk by the *Deodhani* who is said to be possessed by the *Bathou*. A red cock is also sacrificed. The head and blood of the sacrificial pig are smeared on the *asanas* of the minor deities to welcome the Bathou and lead him to his *āsana*. The feet and flesh from the body are cooked in a curry and offered to *Bathou*. No salt, oil, chillies, turmeric or any other spice is used.

Bathou has different gods to serve under him. They are as follows: *Ailong* (bodyguard), *Agrang* (senapati), *Khaila* (messenger), *Kaji* (minister), and *Abla Khungur*, a very powerful God who is said to be the manifestation of *Bathou*. *Bathou's* son is called *Raju Futhur* or *Rajani Fisuda;* His grandson is known as *Raj-Khandra*. Other Gods associated with *Bathou* are *Chāngraja* and *Chāngrani,* who are regarded as *Pasupati* or 'Lord of the Beasts'. They are also known as *Joula* and *Jouman Bura*. To protect their animals from the beasts in the forests, the Bodo-

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Kacharis (as well as the Nepalis) propitiate these two deities by sacrificing a red cock.[5]

The identification of the tribal deity *Bathou* with the Hindu God Śiva seems to indicate an attempt at assimilation of the pre-Hindu beliefs into the Hindu fold. The account of the Darrang Raja Vamsavali[6] also appear to support this viewpoint. This chronicle of the ruling families of Cooch Behar, Bijni and Darrang area, describes how Viswasimha, the first Koch King of Kamarupa (1515-40 A.D.) was born of Śiva, in the form of a *Mech* (Bodo) tribesman called Hariya Mandal. When Viswasimha's son Naranarayan performed sacred rites prescribed in the Hindu scriptures, Śiva appeared in a dream and rebuked him for giving up his own tribal rites.[7] Thereupon, the king made arrangements for the performance of such rites by his Kachari soldiers on the bank of the river Sonkosh. *Upahār* or offerings of ducks and pigeons, liquor and cooked rice, buffaloes and swine, cocks and he-goats were made. There was Kachari dancing to the beating of drums (*madda*). The worship under the auspices of *Deodhani* priest (literally, a nursemaid of the gods) pleased all the gods. This description lends credence to the theory that Śiva was originally a tribal deity who was subsequently assimilated into the Hindu fold. Alternately, to make the Koch royal family more acceptable to the greater Hindu society, the chronicler perhaps invented the story of the King's divine origin from the Hindu god Śiva. The first theory is also discussed by Swami Tattwananda who writes "Some hold that primarily Śiva was the God of the so called Non-Aryans, but in course of time He penetrated into the heart of the people who wrote the hymns propitiating Him in glowing terms. According to them the Śiva cult is the blend of two lines of development, of the Aryan (Vedic) and the pre-Aryan (non-Vedic). It is not a single cult, but a federation of cults"[8] Sir Edward Gait also writes "The religion of the *Mech* is still in an early stage of transition from Animism to Hinduism. They describe themselves as Hindus of the Śaiva sect, and worship Śiva under the name of *Bathou*, and his consort Kāli as *Bali Khungri*.[9]

The worship of the *Siju* plant is not confined to the Kacharis alone. Some of the tribes of Orissa and Chota Nagpur also revere it. Its milky juice is used by natives medicinally.[10] The Bodo Kacharis do not believe in idol worship like the Hindus, nor do they have any temples although they believe in different divinities. In recent years however, due to the growing influence of the Hindu population, *Bathou Mandirs* (temples) have been constructed. But no idol or *liṅga* is placed on the *bedi* or *āsana* of the deity. He is represented by his trident or trisula.

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*** As related by the Bodos of Bhergaon village, Darrang district.

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15

INFLUENCE OF ŚAIVISM IN THE FOLK MUSIC OF ASSAM

*Anima Choudhary**

Austric Alpine and Tibeto Burman elements laid the foundation for the evolution of various cults in Assam before the introduction of Aryadharma and Brahmanical faith.[1] Aryanism had to be modified to a great extent by these cults. The Non-Aryans and the Pre-Aryans have really contributed to the religious beliefs and laid the foundation of later Hinduissm. According to Hutton, the snake cult and worship of Mother Goddess were probably brought in by the earlier invaders of the Mediterranean or Armenoid race. Their religion was also associated with the cult of fertility, phallic worship, the *Devadāsi* cult and probably human sacrifice and ancestor worship[2]. According to S.K. Chatterjee, the practice of Yoga and idea centering round Viṣṇu, Śiva and Devī, the rituals of Pujā and the large number of the Hindu myths, marriage rituals etc. have been taken as survivals of the pre-aryans.[3]

According to P.C. Choudhury, Brahmanical religion consisted of the worship of the elements of nature, but later on it was developed into the worship of personified deities, something like the doctrine of monotheism.[4] Although Hinduism is as old as the Aryan migration to Assam, i.e. the beginning of the Christian era and although all the historical dynasties and kings professed Hindu religion and strived utmost for the maintenance and spread of Hinduism, yet the bulk of the population being ethnically non Aryan remained outside the pale of Hinduism till the beginning of the thirteenth century.[5]

As a result of the impact of the non Aryan culture some important development took place in the Brahmanical religion. In the religious system, the

* Head, Department of History, Chhaygaon College, Chhaygaon, Assam

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worship of innumerable gods and goddesses came to occupy important position. Some of these gods and goddesses gave rise to special cults connected with Śiva. Śakti, Viṣṇu, Sūrya etc. and sectarian rites and beliefs.

Saivism prevailed in Assam from a remote period and was the most popular form of religion in early Assam both amongst the aboriginal and the Aryanised people. The worship of Śiva in his different manifestation both in his phallic and iconographic representation has a great antiquity in Assam.[6] Śiva temples have always outnumbered the temples associated with other individual gods and goddesses. B. Kakoty and B.K. Barua and others speak of the extreme antiquity of the Śaiva cult. According to M. Neog Saivism of Assam cannot trace its origin back, prior to the migration of the Aryan to this province.

In the *Mahābhārata* Bhagadatta of Kamrupa has been eulogized and called "a friend of Śiva".[7] The *Kālikā Purāṇa* records that before the settlement of an Aryan colony ancient Kamrupa was inhabited by the people of Kirata tribe. Śiva seems to have been the guardian deity of the kingdom and this would almost justify by the claim in the *Kālika Purāṇa* (39, 103-4) that the land was reserved by Śambhu for his own domain. Śiva was then worshipped presumably with non Aryan popular rituals. The *Yogini Tantra* mention (2,9,15) that in the Yoginipitha the religion has originated from the Kiratas. *Kālikā Purāna* narrates the episode of Naraka and his invasion of Pragiyotisha and relates that the guardian deity of the city of Kaṃarupa was Śambhu. Naraka probably introduced the cult of Mother Goddess in Kamarupa. Saivism however did not entirely disappeared from the country during the reign of Narak. Śiva was then privately worshipped by the earlier inhabitants of the country. Kakoty considered that Saivism in some gross from with wine and flesh was the prevailing religion of the aboriginal Kiratas. The Aryanised conquerors therefore held the religion in disdain and placed it underban. Saivism on the other hand enjoyed so much popularity that no sooner Naraka was disposed Saivism again came into prominenece. According to Purāṇa, Śiva appears to be the chief leader of the Kiratas. Naraka's contemporary Asura king Bāṇa at Sonitpur was a non Aryan, who was a devotee of Śiva. He had Śambhu as his friend.[8] This confirms that the cult of Śiva worship was largely prevalent amongst the non Aryan tribal population. When Hiuen Tsang visited the country during the reign of Bhaskarvarman, he found that "the Deva temples" were some hundreds in number and that the various system had some myriads of professional adherents.[9] Many of these temples were probably consecrated to Śiva and Saivism was possibly the dominating religion of the time.[10]

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From the historical records it appear that all principal royal dynasties of early Assam were in some way associated in devotion with Śiva. Inscriptions made by the rulers of Kamarupa bear testimony to the popularity of Śiva worship. In the mediaeval age the Ahom kings of Assam had patronised the erection of numerous temples of Śiva in the State and granted land to perpetuate worship of Śiva. Gait has observed that Saivism was one of the popular religion of the Ahoms.

The Kachari Kings of Dimapur styled themselves as worshippers of Hara-Gaurī or Śiva-Durgā as testified by coins issued by Yasonarayan and Pratap Narayan of the sixteenth, seventeenth centuries.

Originally a tribal god Śiva continued to receive homage from the both the ruling families and the tribal communities. The Bodo Kacharis worshipped a god called Bathou. Saivism bears certain affinites with Bodo tribal deity "brai Bathau". Śiva who is represented by a *liṅga* in Hinduism is similarly represented by a cactus shoot in the Bodo traditional religious belief. Tribals worship Śiva in different names according to their rituals. Among different Bodo tribes Śiva is reverenced as Bathau, Bathau-Barai or Bathou or Bathau Sibrai with much dancing, feasting and sacrifice.[11] The Bodo Kacharis believe that Sibrai protects men from diseases, keeps away the wild beast from the cornfield, helps one to win the battle.[1]

Music, dance and drama, however elementary, have always formed important constituents of human culture since the earliest days of human society. Assam seems to have a long and strong tradition of culture of music and dance. The songs, dances and other performing arts are closely associated with religion, with the places of worship as well as with the services and rituals performed therein. Various references to music, musician and musical instruments are to be found in the early Assamese literary works.

"The folk song has been well defined as a lyric poem with melody originating anonymously in times past among unlettered folk and remaining in currency for considerable times, usually centuries..."[12] Assam is strikingly rich in folk songs both in volume and variety. Some of these are connected with different religious cults, Śiva, being Aryanised from original tribal god, plays an important role in the folk music of Assam. In fact the influential gods worshipped in the North East India finds place in mantras, rituals, social affairs and music of the region. Out of all these gods, Śiva has a special place and penetrates deep into all the facts of human life. Śiva has been portrayed in such humanised manner that a common man finds him to be very close to his own life and identifies Śiva as one of his fellow men. He was much more humanised having been endowed with wife, children, household duties and with certain other peculiar characteristics traits which could attract the veneration of the common people.

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Śiva is a most popular deity through out the State and his popularity cuts across racial and sectarian divisions. Śiva is a very powerful figure in a big volume of folk literature and is represented in many songs and dances.

Songs dedicated to Śiva almost always contain a humorous touch. These songs are mostly about the feckless life led by the god and the complaints raised by his wife. In some songs he is described as an unsuccessful householder who is addicted to intoxicants. In some songs his divine greatness has been highlighted. Śiva as an agriculturist, as a beggarly householder indifferent to the welfare and happiness of his family and often indulging in amorous adventures is depicted in various folk songs in Assam.

In some folk songs Śiva is often described as naked, having matted locks, easily appeased.

E Sadaśiva ye tomār sire jatā

jagatak bar diyā āpuni nangathā (Appendix - 1)

[O Sadāśiva you have matted hair on your head, you bless the world but go naked yourself]

Very often Śiva is indulging in dance to the accompaniment of the rhythmic sound of dambaru.

O Śiva Bholānāth Digambar he

Hate dambaru loiā

Dug dug dug kari bāyā

Brishabhe uthia Sivai nache

He nache re

Mathe jatadhar Śivar gale sarpar mālā

Kaṅkāle bāghar chāl gāwe bhasmar dhulā he

Hāte triśul dhāri prabhu jatādhāri

Smasāne Smasane ghuri phure tripurāri he

Halāhala bisa khāi hoilā nilakaṇtha

Taju pāye karo sewā prabhu bhagabanta he

Śivai nāce nāce he nāche re. (Appendix - 2)

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(Simple minded and naked Śiva is dancing riding on the ox and playing dambaru (a musical instrument) dug, dug, dug)

Śiva is fond of hemp. Naturally number of folk songs depict this habit of Śiva

Bhāng khāi pagalā holā he Mahādev

Bhāng khāi pagalā holā

Bhāngar jāle dhari nalay ghar bāri

Umāke gaurī bolā he Mahādev

Bhāng khāi ki buli nitau tini duli

Sapurā dhuturā guti

Bhāngar jālate nalay ghar bāri

Thākā baraṣunat titi. (Appendix - 3)

(Mahādev has become mad taking hemp, being intoxicated with hemp he left home and took Umā as Gaurī, on intoxication he drenched in the rain leaving home).

Kailāshar para Mahādev āhise

brishabh bāhanat uthi

Āji bāra basar bāhi gā dhoā nāi

gondhe jāi prāṇ futi. (Appendix - 4)

(Mahādev has come from Kailāśa ascending on a vehicle of bull. For twelve years he has not taken a bath. It is intolerable the bad smell).

In some songs his divine greatness has been highlighted.

(1) O Hara Hara Hara Nandi Bhringi

Stuti Kare Gandharba Kinnare

A hetu Sadāśiva deva Digambara

Trilokar nātha Hara Śiva jatādhāri

O gale sobhā kare prabhur oi lambā dāri

Kapalate Śobhā kare ardha chandrakalā

Gale sobhā kare prabhur naramundra mālā

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Kanthe śobhā kare prabhur garalar jāl

Kankālate sobhā kare oi bāghar chāl

Bakshe pari sobha oi baghar chal

Bakshe pāri śobbā oi bhāngar juli

Sarba gāye śobhā kare oi bhasmār dhuli

Kare śobhā kare prabhur triśula dambaru

Brişabhe chariyā phure jagatara guru

Kahaya bhakata sabe sunā Gaurī māwa

Hena Śiva charanata sahasra praṇām. (Appendix - 5)

(Nandi, Bringi, Gandharba and Kinnare worship Sadāśiva, who is the supreme of the world with jaṭā on the head and snake around the neck).

(2) *Bom bom bom Bholānāth*

Tumi anāthar nāth

Tumi jagatare pati

Hate śula māthāya jaṭā gāye bhasmar dhuli

Sarpa mālā gale āse kandhe bhikshār juli

Keho bole burhāgosāin dambaru bajowā

Keho bole jaṭār maje gaṅgājal hekhuwa (Appendix - 6)

(Bholanath, you are the supreme of the world).

(3) *Namo namo Sadāśiva tumi Paśupati*

Najānu mahimā tomār āmi murhamati. (Appendix - 7)

(Oh Sadaśiva, we worship you. You are supreme, we are ignorant of your greatness).

There are some songs regarding the marriage of Śiva.

O Sadāśiva ye o vivāha karibār mana

Ānilā Brahmāk mati karilā biyār khāti

Hara Gaurī harasita mana

Brahmāi bolanta bāpu kariyā mana sthira

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Āhin māhar purnimāta hoilā Budhbāra

Sighre nisi gāilā āhila budhbāra

Jātrā sowā telarbhār karilā jogāra

Tāmol pānar bhāra aneka sambhāra

Telarbhār niyā goila Bhim bāhubara

Hāluwa bāhana Sivar saṅge devagana

Vivāha karibā lāgi karilā gamana. (Appendix - 8)

(Sadāśiva contemplating to marry invited Brahmā and made arrangement of marriage. Brahma fixed the Wednesday, the purnimā of *aswin* month for marriage. The Bhima had gone with bettlenut and more other material as marriage offering).

Another song goes like this:

Mahādev has come playing his dambaru. What does he want? He does not beg anything but the daughter of his father-in-law.

Mahādev āhise dambaru bajaise

bhikhā bā māgise ki

sāulu namago saru o nāmago

Māngisu sahurar ji. (Appendix - 9)

In another song Menakā, mother of Pārvatī is offended seeing the naked son-in-law.

Bar baribā jai Menakā sange duni ghāt

Māthār kapor gusāi dekhe joāi ulaṅghat.

Śiva āhi roilā pāse jātra kalar tale

Menakāi chwe jāi bari anār chale

Hātat pradip dhari Menakā sundari

Jowāir mukhar deki chawe ghuri ghuri

Deki sarpagaṇe pāse kare phos phos

Dare ulatila devī kari khos mos.

Chāndo bhādo bihār mul ānilā kosāi

Goadh loi Menakāi āgbarbaiba jāi

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Ousadhar gaṅdha pāi sūrpa ātarilā

Kakālar bāghar chāl sulaki parilā

Henadekhi sarbaloke bole hari hari

Berhi berhi hāse jata parbatiyā narī

Jowair abasthā dekhi Menakā sundarī

Lāje ulatilā devī buli hari hari (Appendix - 10)

The patched-up life of Śiva-Pārvatī is considered to be that of an ideal family. The God therefore appears in wedding songs also. The conjugal life of Hara and his consort Gourī is considered a happy and prosperous one. Assamese elders usually bless a newly married couple by uttering the words "*Hara Gauri basati haok*" (may Hara Gaurī reside in your home).

(*Rām Rām*) *Gas saru saru pāt siriliā*

Manik thopa thope lāge

Haraloi Gaurik nidio nubulibā

Sristi barhiba lāge. (Appendix - 11)

Although Śiva is one of the Hindu Trinity, his sons Kārtika and Gaṇapati yell for food as there is nothing in the house to eat. But Śiva is oblivious and lie flat in intoxication. Pārvatī therefore says this in anguish:-

O āi kene biyā dilā bāpe

marilu marilu samulai marilu

jatiyā bhāngurār tape

Āji ghare khābar cāul emuthi nāi

parare gharate āshā

Thākibār nāi ghar nabāndhak Saṅkar

Smasān sālite baha.

Anyar chawale pithā panā lāru

Paduli olāi khāi

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Kārtik Gaṇapati kāndiba lagise

Ghare khud emuthi nāi. (Appendix - 12)

Śiva is also known as Burhāgosāi and accordingly Pārvatī is addressed as Burhāgosāni. In Folk belief he is the greatest and oldest of all Gods. In the folk songs his activities are more often depicted as those of an elderly person and as such he is called the Burhāgosāi or the Old God. In order to get blessings from the Burhāgosāi they sing,

Burhāgosāi duroloi nājābā

Sonar dambaru dim gharate bājābā

Sonar māje jhilimili

Rupar māje rewā

Burhāgosāi aihbā lāgchi

Durar pora sewā (Appendix - 13)

Another song goes like this:

Teteli talate karo tāte bāti

Pāhori āhilo kuchhi

Kuchhire lagate pagalāi kilāba

Jāme āir gharoloi guchhi (Appendix - 14)

The Bodos have folk songs regarding their God Bathau.

Oh God, our father protect your ignorant Bodo children.

You are the creator, preserver and destroyer.

All in one, you are peerless.

Conclusion

Innumerable folk songs glorifying Śiva and large number of temples and *thans* (holy places) dedicated to Śiva scattered all over Assam show the popularity of Saivism. The sectarian antagonism is not at all perceived in the depiction of Śiva. Various folk musical literatures as found prevalent in folk culture and folk music in Assam indicate that Saivism attained highest both as a religious doctrine and as a popular social belief. There are enormous textual scriptures based on

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Saivism and these are being sung in religious ceremonies like Śivarātri, Manasā Pujā etc. Musical performance of these folk songs are also accompanied by dance form and various musical instruments (which are basically Saivite) such as *dambaru, dotara, tokari, rāmtāl, dhol, mṛidanga, singa, khol, nagārā, śaṅkha, ghaṇṭa etc.* Various songs sung in festivals and religious ceremonies have been sources of entertainment and amusement from the early period. As most of these songs have come down to us through oral transmission from early times, they have naturally undergone change in language and diction to accommodate the changing needs of time.

It could be said that from the legendary king Naraka upto the present century Saivism has been prevailing in Assam as a living religious cult. Saivism influenced the development of folk music in Assam.

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[१]

एक सदाशिव ए, तोमार शिरे तटा
जगतक बर दिया, आपुनि नंगठा

[२]

ओ शिव भोलानाथ दिगम्बर है
हाते डम्बरु लैया
डुग, डुग करि बाया
ब्रिषभे उठिया शिवाई नाछे
हे नाछे रे
माथे जटाधर शिवर, गले सर्पेर माला
कंकाले बाघर छाल, गावे भष्मर धुला हे
होते त्रिशूल घरि, प्रभु जटाधारी
स्मसाने स्मसाने धुरि फुरे त्रिपरारी हे
हलाहल बिष खाइ हईला नीलकण्ठ
तजु पावे करो सेवा प्रभू भगवन्त हे
शिवइ नाछे नाछे नाछे है

[३]

भांग खाई पगला होला हे महादेव
भांग खाई पगला होला
भांगर जाले धरि, जलय घर बारी
उमाके गौरी बोला हे महादेव
भांग खाई कि बुलि नितौ तिनि दुलि

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सपुरा दतुरा गुति
भांगर जालते नलय घर बारी
थाका बरषुणत तिति

[४]

कैलाशर परा महादेव आहिसे
ब्रिषभ बाहनत उठि
आजि बार बसर बाहि गा धोवा नाइ
गोंधे जाइ प्राण फुटि

[५]

ओ हर हर नन्दि भ्रींगी
स्तुति करे गन्दर्व किण्णरे
आ हेतु सदाशिव देव दिगम्बर
त्रिलोकर नाथ हर शिरे जटाधारी
गले शोभाकरे प्रभुर ऐ लम्बा दाड़ि
कपालते शोभाकरे अर्ध चन्द्र कला
गले शोभाकरे प्रभूर नरमुन्द माला
कण्ठे शोभा करे प्रभूर गरलर जाल
ककालते शोभा करे ऐ बाघर छाल
बक्षे परि शोभा करे ऐ भांगर जुलि
सर्ब गावे सोभा करे ऐ भस्मर धुलि
करे शोभा करे प्रभूर त्रिशुल डम्बरु
बृषभे चरिया फुरे जगतर गुरू

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कहय भकत सवे शुना गोरी माव
हेन शिव चरनत सहस्त्र प्रणाम

[६]

बोम बोम भोलानाथ
तुमि अनाथर नाथ
तुमि जगतरे पति
हाते शूल माथाय जटा
गावे भष्म धुलि
सर्पर माला गले आछे
कान्धे भिक्षार जुलि
केहों बोले बुढ़ा गोसाई
डम्बरु बजोवा
केहो बोले जटार माजे
गंगाजल हेखुवा

[७]

नमो नमो सहाशिव तुमि पशुपति
नाजानो महिमा तोमार आमि मुढ़मति

[८]

ओ सदाशिव ऐ ओ बिबाह करिबार मन
आनिला ब्रह्माक माति करिला बियार खाति
हर गौरीर हरसित मन
ब्रह्माइ बोलन्त बापु करिया मनस्थिर

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आहिन माहर पुर्णिमात होइला बुघबार
शीघ्रे निशि गैला आहिला बुघबार
जात्रा सोवा तेल भार करिला जोगार
तामोल पाणर भार अनेक सम्भार
तेलभार निया गैला भीम बाहुबर
हालुवा बाहन शिवर संगे हेवगण
बिबाह करिबा लागि करिला गमण

[९]

महादेव आहिसे डम्बरु बाजिसे
मिक्षा बा मागिसे कि
साउलो नामागु सरु ओ नामागो
मागिसो शहूरर जी

[१०]

बर बरिबा जाइ मेनका संगे दुनि घाट
माथार कापोड़ गुचाई देखे जोवाई उलंगत
शिव आहि रैला पासे यात्रा कलर तले
मेनकाई चावे जाइ बरि अनार चले
हातत प्रदीप धरि मेनका सुन्दरी
जोवाईर मुखक देखि चावे घुरि घुरि
देखि सर्पगणे पासे करे फोस फोँस
डरे उलदिला देवी करि खोस मोस
चान्दो भादो बिहार मुल आनिला कोसाई

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गोंघ लै मेनकाई आगबढ़ाइवा जाइ
औषघर गंध पाइ सर्प आतरिला
ककालर बाघर चाल सुलकि परिला
हेन देखि सर्बलोके बोले हरि हरि
बेढ़ि बेढ़ि हासे जत पर्बतीया नारी
जोवाईर अवस्या देखि मेनका सुन्दरी
लाजे उलदिला देवी बुलि हरि हरि

[११]

(राम राम) गस सरु सरु पात सिरिलिया
मानिक थोपा थोपे लागे
हर लै गौरीक निदिऊ नुबुलिबा
सृस्ति बाढ़िब लागे

[१२]

ओ आइ केने विया दिला बापे
मरिलु मरिलु समुदाइ मरिलु
जटिया भांगुरार पाके ।
आजि घरे खावर चाउल एमुठि नातू
पररे घरते आशा
थाकिबार नाई घर नाबांघे शंकर
श्मशान शालीते बाहा ।
अन्यर चवाले पिठा पना लारु
पदुलि ओलाये खाइ

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कार्त्तिक गणपति कादिवाला गिछे
घरे खूद एमुलि नाइ

[१३]

बुढ़ा गोसाई दुरलै नाजाबा
सोनर डम्बरु दिम घरते बजाबा
सोनर माजे झिलिमिली
रुपर माजे रेवा
बुढ़ा गोसाई आहिवा लागछि
दूरर पराई सेवा

[१४]

तेतेलि तलते करो ताते बाति
पाहरि आहिलो कुछि
कुछिरे लगते पगलाई किलाब
जामे आईर घरलै गुछि

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16

LANDMARKS OF BĀHUBALĪ IMAGES IN KARNATAKA

*Maruti Nandan Tiwari**

Bāhubalī,[1] also known as Gommaṭeśvara in the southern Jaina tradition, was the second son of Jina Ṛṣabhanātha, born of his junior queen Sunandā. His step brother Bharata, who became *cakravartī* succeeding his father, ruled from Vinītā [Sāketa or Ayodhyā]; while Bāhubalī was ruling from Takṣaśilā (or Podanasa or Podanapura according to the Digambara Jaina tradition). Soon after the renunciation by Ṛṣabhanātha, Bharata began to subdue the various kingdoms and principalities (of *Bhāratavarṣa*) and, according to the Law of the Disc-weapon *(cakra)* had the need even to subdue Bāhubalī and his other 98 brothers. Except Bāhubalī, all his brothers surrendered their domains and became recluse. A fierce duel took place between Bharata and Bāhubalī for trial of strength in which Bāhubalī emerged almost as victor. At the final moment of his triumph, the reality of the futility of worldly possessions dawned in Bāhubalī's mind and he consequently renounced the world for attaining omniscience and hence salvation from the cycle of existences. As an ascetic, he performed very rigorous austerities by standing in the *kāyotsarga* posture for a whole year and attained *kevalajñāna*.

To suggest his rigorous *tapas*. Bāhubalī in visual representations is shown not only in the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* but also with creepers entwining his limbs, and snakes, lizards, and scorpions are either shown nearby or even creeping over his body.[2] These representational characteristics suggest the long passage of time in which he was absorbed in *tapas* and deep trance. The posture of Bāhubalī is symbolic of perfect self - control while his nudity implies total renunciation. The profound austerities of Bāhubalī inspired both the Śvetāmbara and the Digambara Jainas to worship him, specifically the Digambaras. Bāhubalī, as a result, became a powerful symbol as well as a material image evocative of the ethos of self-sacrifice and *ahiṁsā* preached by the Jinas.[3] It is further believed that Bāhubalī

* Reader, History of Art, Deptt. Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi - 221005.

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perhaps was the first to have propounded no-war policy by preferring duel to battle between the armies to avert violence and killing of war.[4] The entwining creepers and the figures of scorpions, lizards and snakes on the body of Bāhubalī perhaps also symbolise the intimate relationship between man and nature and their rhythmic coexistence. The Bāhubalī images are suggestive also of the elevation of a Man (*Kevalin*) to the point of becoming an object of worship.

The earliest reference to the fight between Bharata and Bāhubalī is noticed in the *Paumacariya* of Vimala Sūri (A.D. 473), the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* and the *Āvaśyaka-niryukti* (c. early sixth century A.D.).[5] The *Paumacariya,* although alluding to the renunciation of Bāhubalī and his attainment of *kevala-jñāna*, does not mention the details concerning creepers, reptiles etc. that crept on his body.[6] The detailed account of the *tapas* of Bāhubalī is narrated in the literary works of the southern Jainism, from seventh century A.D. onwards, namely the *Padmapurāṇa* of Ravisena (A.D. 676), the *Harivaṁśa purāṇa* of Jinasena of *Punnāṭa-saṅgha* (A.D. 783), the *Ādipurāṇa (Mahāpurāṇa)* of Jinasena of *Pañcastūpānvaya* (after A.D. 837), and also the northern works such as the *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita* of Hemacandra (c.mid 12th century A.D.) and the *Caturviṁśatikā Jina Caritra* of Amara Candra Sūri[7] (13th century A.D. - 70.367-396) which invariably refer to the meandering and entwining vines and serpents.[8] The association of deer and elephants, hawks and sparrows, and lizards and scorpions with Bāhubalī is also envisaged by these texts.[9]

The antiquity of Bāhubalī images dates back to c.late sixth or early seventh century A.D. Then on, Bāhubalī was a popular subject of depiction as well as adoration throughout the subsequent centuries in almost all the regions and in both the *Śvetāmbara* and *Digambara* traditions. The present paper deals with the landmarks of Bāhubalī images in Karnataka. In this connection four main points are to be noted (i) The earliest images of Bāhubalī are found from Karnataka, (ii) These images, belonging to Digambara sect, established the iconographic formula of the depiction of Bāhubalī which was subsequently followed on pan-Indian basis. (iii) The most gigantic images of Bāhubalī were carved in Karnataka which suggest the high esteem accorded to Bāhubalī in the region. (iv) The most important is the earliest rendering of the Vidayādharis (female angels) on both the sides of Bāhubalī images in cuncurrence with the injunctions of the Digambara Jaina texts.

The earliest visual representations of Bāhubalī are known from Digambara Jaina caves at Aihole and Bādamī (c. A.D. 600) in Bijapur district of Karnataka. These figures, identical in details, show Bāhubalī as standing sky-clad in the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* on simple pedestals with hair combed back in *jaṭā* fashion with

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lateral stands hanging over the shoulders. It may be mentioned here, in passing, that almost all the later examples, mainly from south India, the lateral strands are shown with Bāhubalī which remind us of his association with Ṛṣabhanātha on the one hand and long passage of time of his *tapas* on the other. The entwining creepers, beautifully spread over his legs and hands and cobras,[10] close to his feet, also suggest the prolonged and deep meditation of Bāhubalī. The depression on his abdomen, half-shut eyes and the erect posture also indicate the deep meditation. Bāhubalī in both the instances is joined by the figures of the two Vidyādharis, wearing decorated *mukuṭas* and other ornaments and holding the ends of the entwining creepers.

All the previous scholars including U.P. Shah and C. Sivaramamurti, have identified these flanking female figures with the figures of *sādhvis* Brāhmī and Sundarī, the two sisters of Bāhubalī, who, according to the Śvetāmbara texts, at the instance of Ṛṣabhanātha came to Bāhubalī to persuade him to shake off the remnants of pride. Bāhubalī standing in *kāyotsarga* posture in trance could attain omniscience only after that.[11] But the Digambara works, on the contrary, envisage the presence of the two Vidyādharis, who according to the *Harivaṁśapurāṇa* and the *Ādipurāṇa*[12] came down to earth to remove the entwining creepers from the body of Bāhubalī engrossed in *tapas*. These figures in any case could not be the figures of Jaina *sādhvis,* Brāhmī and Sundarī, in Digambara Jaina context, since these figures are endowed with decorated *mukuṭas* and other ornaments. The Digambara works further mention that Bāhubalī attained omniscience only after he received the homage of his elder brother Bharata Cakravartī. It is also mentioned that the devotion of Bharata was so deep that he caused an image of Bāhubalī to be made in gold and installed at Podanapura. The image from Bādāmī (verandā of Cave IV) however contains two more female figures, standing close to Bāhubalī with folded hands. These figures may represent the adorers.

A splendid bronze image (20" in height) of Bāhubalī, assignable to c. eight-ninth century A.D. and reported to have procured from a field at Śravaṇabelgola in Hassan district of Karnataka, is preserved in the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai.[13] This image again is the earliest of all the known bronze images of Bāhubalī. The sky-clad Bāhubalī stands as he does in the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* with beautifully and tenderly delineated meandering stems with leaves which entwines his legs, thighs and arms. The hair combed back in almost parallel rows beautifully ends in lateral stands falling on shoulders. The oval face has the rare grace and introspective look. The rhythmic body contour combined with animation and plasticity is superb.

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What is specially important in the images of Bāhubalī, who was neither a Jina, nor does he figure in the list of the 63 *Śalākāpuruṣas* (Great Men), is that he occupies such a singularly venerated position in Jaina worship that the tallest images carved in Jaina tradition pertain to Bāhubalī. These colossi are carved at the places such as Śravaṇabeḷgola (nearly 57 feet high - A.D. 983), Kārkal (A.D. 1432) and Veṇur (A.D. 1604), all in Karnataka. Of all the three colossi, the imposing Śravaṇabeḷgola figure surpasses all the known figures of Bāhubalī in scale and gradeur. The image prepared by Cāmuṇḍaraya (bearing epithet Gommaṭa), the General of the Western Gaṅga king Rācamalla-IV (A.D. 974-84), shows Bāhubalī as standing sky-clad in the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* with climbing plant fastened round his thighs and hands, and ant-hills carved nearby with snakes issuing out of them.

The *Mahāmastakābhisheka* of Gommaṭeśvara-Bāhubalī image at Śravaṇabeḷgola, marking the thousand year of the *Pratiṣṭhāpan* (installation) of the colossus, was celebrated in February 1981. The imposing colossus of rare beauty and grace is undoubtedly the greatest masterpiece of western Gaṅga school prepared with deep devotion. The beautifully delineated entwining creepers and somewhat benign oval face with introspective look, earlobes and perfect state of motionlessness are all superb. The monumentality combined with suppleness is a rare feature of this image. In all the above three colossi, however, the figures of Vidyādharis are conspicuous by their absence. But the other features are in full agreement with the descriptions found in the *Ādipurāṇa* (Parve 36) and the *Harivaṁśapurāṇa* (Sarga 11.98-102). The other two colossi from Kārkal and Veṇūr, both belonging to Vijayanagar period, are identical in details. In all these figures the anthills over the legs of Bāhubalī with the serpents issuing from them could be seen. The installation of these gigantic figures against the natural landscape create a magnificent effect miles around.[14]

The inscription at the feet of the colossus at Śravaṇabeḷgola is not only in Kannaḍa but also in Tamil-Granth and Nāgarī to make it of all India importance. The Deccan, South and North are thus represented by the three scripts giving identical legend of its creation by Cāmuṇḍarāya.[15]

The earliest figures of Bāhubalī from Aihoḷe and Bādāmī set the iconographic formula for the rendering of Bāhubalī in respect of the *Kāyotsarga*, posture entwining creepers alongwith the snakes coming out of the anthills, and, above all, the flanking figures of two *Vidyādharis*, holding the ends of the meandering vines. All these features are prescribed by the Digambara Jaina texts. Ellorā (in Aurangabad, Maharashṭra), being the most important Jaina site from the standpoint of the number of independent figures of Bāhubalī (17 figures in all), belonging to 9th

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century A.D., reveal the distinct bearing of the figures of Bāhubalī from Aihoḷe and Bādāmī. However, further elaboration in terms of some of the *Prātihāryas* like halo, parasol (single but not triple), drumbeater, celestial musicians and sometimes small Jina figures in *parikara* at Ellorā marks the process of elevation of Bāhubalī to make him almost equal to the Jinas, highest in Jaina worship. This process was further intensified in north India as revealed by the Bāhubalī images from the prolific Digambara Jaina sites like Deogarh (10th - 12th century A.D.), Khajurāho (10th-12th century A.D.) and Bilhari (11th century A.D.)[16] Besides the *aṣṭ aprātihāryas*, the above images from north India also contain the figures of two-armed *Yakṣa* and *Yakṣī* as *Śāsanadevatās* (Deogarh, temple no. 11 and Śāntinātha Jaina Museum, Khajurāho - 12th century A.D.). In one of the examples from Deogarh (temple no. 2, 11th century A.D.), Bāhubalī is also shown alongwith Śītalanātha and Abhinandan Jinas in *tritīrthī* image.[19]

References

1. He is also called Bhujabalī and Kukkuṭeśvara and is supposed to be the first among the Kāmadevas of this *avasarpiṇī* age.
2. The Bāhubalī figures from Ellorā also show deer, dogs, rats and camels.
3. The Brahmanical correspondence to such rigorous austerities is the sage Vālmikī around whom also ant-hills and creepers grew during his deep trance. See. U.P. Shah, "Gommaṭeśvara Bāhubalī, the Great Saint", *Jain Journal,* Vol. 15, No. 4, April 1981, p. 133.
4. Dalsukh Malvania, "The Story of Bharata and Bāhubalī", *Jain Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 4, April 1981, p. 141.
5. The story is also narrated in the *Āvaśyaka-bhāṣya* as quoted in the *Āvaśyaka-vriti* of Haribhadra and the *Āvaśyaka-cūrṇi* : See. U.P. Shah, *op.cit.*, pp. 131-34.
6. *Paumacariya* 4.43-55 (ed. H. Jacobi, Prakrit Text Society Series 6,) Varanasi, 1962, pt. I, pp. 34-35.
7. *Padmapurāṇa,* Vol. I, 4.74-77; *Harivaṁśapurāna,* 11.98-102; *Ādipurāṇa* (of *Mahāpurāṇa*) 36. 104-186; *Triṣaṣṭiśalākapuruṣacarita,* Vol. I, *Ādiśvaracarita,* 5.740-98.
8. *Valmikávivarodyātairatyugraih sa mahoragaiḥ/śyāmādīaṁ ca vallībhiḥ veṣṭ taḥ prapkevalam// -- Padmapurāṇa,* 4.76 Also see, *Harivaṁśapurāṇa* 11.99-100.

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9. *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra,* Vol. I, *Ādiśvaracaritra* 5.745-77; *Ādipurāṇa,* Vol. II. 36.165. It is mentioned in the *Ādipurāṇa* that the lions, elephants and other wild animals of great enmity used to sit amicably near Bāhubalī. This atonce reminds us of the Jina *Samavasaraṇa.*

10. Two snakes in case of *Aihoḷe* figure and four in case of Bādāmī figure.

11. *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra,* Vol. I, *Ādiśvaracaritra* 5.782-87, pp. 325-26.

12. *Latāṁ vyapanayantībhyām khecarībhyām babhau muniḥ/*

Harivaṁśapurāṇa. 11.101

vidyādharyaḥ kadācicca krīḍāhetorūpāgatāḥ/

vallīruddheṣṭayāmāsuḥ muneḥ sarvāṅgasaṅginīḥ//

Ādipurāṇa. Vol. I, 36.183.

13. U.P. Shah, "Gommaṭeśvara Bāhubalī...", p. 138.

14. C. Sivaramamurti, *Panorama of Jain Art,* New Delhi, 1983, pp. 6, 131, 86.

15. C. Sivaramamurti, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

16. For details consult U.P. Shah, *"Bāhubalī : A Unique Bronze in the Museum," Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, No. 4, 1953-54,* pp. 32-39; Maruti Nandan Tiwari, *"Note on Some Bāhubalī Images from North India," East and West,* New Series, Vol. 23, Nos. 3-4, Sept.-Dec. 1973, pp. 347-53.

17. Maruti Nandan Tiwari, *op.cit.*, p. 352.

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PROF. *K.D. BAJPAI* MEMORIAL LECTURE
VARĀHA IMAGES IN MADHYA PRADESH : AN ICONOGRAPHIC STUDY

*Haripriya Rangarajan**

Madhya Pradesh is the only State in India where the earliest images of Varāha in zoomorphic and anthropomorphic forms have been found. The earliest image of zoomorphic form of varāha datable to 500 - 512 A.D., is still standing majestically in Eran (Dt. Vidisa). Similarly, the earliest image of anthropomorphic form of Varāha belonging to the 5th Century A.D. is found in the Varāha court in cave No. 5 in Udayagiri (Dt. Vidisa). The images of Varāha found in Madhya Pradesh belong to the period beginning from the 5th Century A.D. to the 14th Century A.D. During this period, Madhya Pradesh was ruled by different royal dynasties such as the Guptas-Aulikaras, Naḷas, Pāṇḍus, Uccakalpas, Gūrjara Pratiharas, Kalacuris, Kacchavahas (Kacchapaghatas), Candellas, and Pramāras who patronised the construction of temples of Varāha in both forms i.e. zoomorphic and anthropomorphic. The total number of images of Varāha datable to this long period, I have found in the State, is 86 of which 29 are in zoomorphic form. These are found in places such as Eran, Khoh, Baḍoh, Murādapur, Karītālāi, Bilhari, Jabalpur, Panāgar, Majhouli, Khor, Maṇḍasor, Indore, Hinglājgarh, Bhopal, Ujjain, Dudhāi, Cāndpur, Khajurāho, Bunjar, Samasgarh, Mamleśvar, Omkāreśvar Karohaṇ, Udayagiri, Rāmgarh, Nachnā, Rājim, Tigowa, Thanagaon, Sirpur, Mahua, Bargaon, Sohāgpur, Shāhḍol, Moḍi, Badnāwar, Bandhogarh, Maṇḍlā, Gyāraspur, Āshāpuri, Doni, Kadvāha, Dhāmadha, Suhānia, Tewār, Sāgar, Jangjīr, Kohlā and Māṇḍu. Some of them are preserved in the Museums of the State.

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* Lady Governor Andhra Pradesh and Eminent Art Historian.

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The myth of Varāha as the uplifter of earth developed in two stages. In the first stage Varāha was visualised as cosmogonical in character and in the second stage as part of the *avatāra* cycle.

Cosmological Character of Varāha myth in the first stage:

The first stage which covers a long period from the Vedic times to the Cosmogonical section of the purāṇas regard Varāha as the creator of the earth. However, there is one difference in the statement of the Vedic scriptures and the early purāṇas. While the Vedic tradition named the creator as Prajāpati, the Purāṇas called him Brahmā. Furthermore the Purāṇas say that it was not Brahmā but the power of Nārāyaṇa which entered the body of Brahmā, then took the form of Varāha and brought the goddess Earth on the surface. Then Brahmā created the universe. In these texts there is no mention of Viṣṇu nor his incarnation of Varāha. The early Purāṇas while describing the cosmic aspect of Varāha compare each and every limb of it with the various components of *yajña* and call it *yajña varāha.*

The earliest reference to Varāha's association with goddess Earth is found in Bhūmi sūkta of the *Atharva veda.* It says, "Bearing the fool, bearer of what is heavy, patiently enduring the settling down (or destruction) of the excellent and of the evil, the earth united with Varāha (or being found by Varāha) yawns (opens herself) for the wild pig[1]."

The earliest reference to the identification of Varāha with Prajāpati is found in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*[2], the *Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Saṁhitā*[3] and the *Kaṭaka Saṁhitā*[4]. According to the *Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Saṁhitā,* Prajāpati by assuming the form of Varāha entered the premordial waters and brought up the soil exactly the size of his snout which became the Earth. Then in the form of Viśvakarma he planned her hence she became *Pṛthvī.*

In the Brāhmaṇas, the relationship of Prajāpati Varāha with goddess Earth is fully established. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* very clearly explains that Varāha raised the Earth up, therefore, he was her lord. The text addresses the Varāha as "Emuṣa Varāha" and identifies him with Prajāpati.[5]

The cosmogonical section of the purāṇas such as *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*[6], *and Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[7], *Matsya Purāṇa*[8], *Vāyu Purāṇa*[9], *Kūrma Purāṇa*[10] and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*[11] while explaining the legend of '*uplifting the earth*' they bring to our notice two important differences. Firstly, they replace the creator Brahmā in the place of Prajāpati. Secondly, they say that the power of Supreme Nārāyaṇa entered the body of Brahmā who then assumed the form of Varāha and uplifted goddess Bhū from

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the *Pātāla*. From their explanation, it is very clear that according to them Brahmā alone is not the 'uplifter of Earth'. Howerver, the *Matsya Purāṇa* is the only text which tries to synchronise the oneness of Viṣṇu with Brahmā instead of Supreme Nārāyaṇa.

Again the purāṇas such as the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, the *Matsya Purāṇa*, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, and the *Brahma Purāṇa*. describe the image of Yajña Varāha which is in the zoomorphic form.

V.S. Agrawala opines, the conception of Yajña Varāha seems to have been formulated for the first time by the author of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* (adh. 6, ślokas 16-22), which includes it in the proper context of *sṛṣṭi varṇana*, and from there taken by the Matsya which adds it at the fag end in ch.248"[12]. He also adds that the version of Yajña Varāha given in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (I, 4.32-35) is the combination of some epithets from the *Matsya* with some new ones of its own, and the whole thing is restated in a new metrical form. Similarly the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (III, 13. 35-38) also describes the Yajña Varāha in its own metaphorical expression. Besides these purāṇas, the description of Yajña Varāha is found in other purāṇas such as the *Brahmāṇḍa*, Prakriyapada, (5. 9-23), the *Brahma Purāṇa* (213. 33-37), *Harivaṁśa*, (I, 41, 29-35; III, 34, 34-41); the *Padma Purāṇa, sṛṣṭi khaṇḍa* (16. 55-61), the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* (khaṇḍa I, adh. 2, śl. 3-8), Viṣṇu Smṛti (1.3-9) and also in the *Viṣṇu Sahasranāma* explained by Ādi Śankara in *Śankara Bhāṣya* on the word Yajñānga in *śloka* 117. In all these texts mentioned above there are seven *ślokas* in which Viṣṇu as a Boar is compared to *Yajña*. In these texts they compare each and every limb of the body of Varāha to each and every component of *Yajña*. Their conception of *Yajña* Varāha is based on two factors. They are: (i) the real meaning of Yajña Varāha in the light of the Vedic cosmogony and (ii) the corresponding relationship of the various limbs of Varāha with the various elements of *Yajña*.

It is very important to note that these purāṇas while explaining Varāha as Yajña Varāha, do identify him with Brahmā who is then identified with Nārāyaṇa.

Avatāra aspect of Varāha myth in the second stage:

In the Gupta period (ie 4th - 5th Century A.D.) Vaiṣṇavism was much patronized by the royal family and the doctrine of *avatāra* assumed great importance. As a result the action of uplifting the earth which was previously attributed to Brahmā was transferred to Viṣṇu and was incorporated in the *avatāra* cycle.

The *Linga Purāṇa*[13], *and Bhāgavata Purāṇa*[14] and the *Padma Purāṇa*[15] narrate the *avatāra* of Varāha in detail. According to them Viṣṇu assumed the

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avatāra of Varāha, found the goddess Earth in the *Pātāla* with Hiraṇyākṣa, killed the demon and brought goddess Bhu on the surface. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (*skandha* III, adh. 13, verses 13-30) narrate the Varāha myth in relation to the creation. They say that emergence of Boar form assumed by Brahmā belongs to the *Svayambhuva Manvantara*. However in the same *skandha,* in the same *adhyaya*, verse 31 says that the emergence of Boar form assumed by Viṣṇu belongs to the *Cakśuṣa Manvantara*. According to it, Viṣṇu assumed the form of Boar, killed Hiranyākṣa and brought the Earth on the surface by carrying her on his tusk.

In the *Linga Purāṇa* thrice the myth of Varāha is mentioned. In Ch.4, *śl.* 58-63 and Ch. 70 *śl.* 115-125 attribute Varāha myth to Brahmā. However in *adh.94, śl.* 5-14 describe Hiranyākṣa's carrying goddess Earth to the Nether region and the action of killing Hiranyākṣa is attributed to Viṣṇu. This is the only Purāṇa which says that after killing the demon, Varāha brought the goddess Bhū on the surface and made her sit on his lap. The deity Varāha with goddess Bhū seated on his lap is known as Bhū varāha and Varāha is represented in this form in many temples in South India.

A very interesting reference with regard to Varāha is found in the *Padma Purāṇa*. It says that Hiranyākṣa carried Bhū on his head. When Goddess Bhū was about to fall from the head of Hiraṇyakṣa at the time of his death, Varāha quickly carried her and kept her on the head of śeṣa. A beautiful representation of the description of the *Padma Purāṇa* is found in Majhouli in Madhya Pradesh. The illustrated description of the same is given in the following pages.

Among the śilpa texts, *Aparājitapṛcchā*[16] is the only one which describes the cosmogonical aspect of Varāha. The other texts such as the *Abhilaṣ itārthacintāmaṇi*[17] (Compendium), *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*[18] (compendium), *Rūpamaṇḍana,*[19] *Devatāmūrtiprakaraṇa*,[20] *Śilparatna,*[21] Śilparantnākara,[22] *Mānasollāsa*[23] treat Varāha as part of *avatāra* cycle and provide the appropriate iconographic canons. Among the Purāṇas, the *Matsya*,[24] the *Agni*[25] and the *Viṣ ṇudharmottara Purāṇa*[26] provide the iconographic canons of Varāha as part of the *avatāra* cycle.

Thus, in the first stage of the myth of Varaha while he is shown in the Vedic literature as Prajāpati, the creator and the architect of the universe, in the cosmogonical section of the *purāṇas,* Prajāpati is replaced by Brahmā and is identified with Nārāyaṇa. In the second stage of the Varāha myth, with the popularity of Vaiṣṇavism, Viṣṇu entirely occupied the position of Brahmā and the whole legend came under the spell of the doctrine of incarnation. As a result Varāha came to be regarded as part of the *avatāra* cycle. Thus the identification of Varāha with

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Viṣṇu and the transformation of the concept of cosmogony into the concept of *avatāra* has played an important role in the second stage of the development of Varāha myth. With the concept of *avatāra* gaining acceptance, the Varāha myth lost its cosmogonical cannotation completely.

With reference to the availability of the images of Varāha in India, Madhya Pradesh is the only State where the earliest images of Varāha in zoomorphic and anthropomorphic forms have been found. In the zoomorphic form, the sculptors have exhibited two important aspects of Varāha.

They are:-

(1) Firstly the cosmogonical aspect of Varāha with reference to the creator Prajāpati - Brahmā and his association with goddess Earth which is explained in the texts of the Vedic period and in the cosmogonical section of the purāṇas.

(2) Secondly, the *yajña* aspect of Varāha in which each and every limb of him is compared with each and every component of *yajña* (sacrifice). In this description, the image of Varāha is called Yajña Varāha. In the anthropomorphic form the incarnation aspect of Viṣṇu is exhibited and is called Bhū Varāha.

As mentioned earlier the availability of the images of Varāha in both forms found in the state stretch over a period of nine hundred years. They are datable to the periods begining from the 5th Century A.D. to the 14th Century A.D.

Iconographic details:

In Madhya Pradesh while the concept of (i) creation (*sṛṣṭi*) and (ii) sacrifice (*yajña*) are depicted on the body of Zoomorphic Varāha, the concept of incarnation of Viṣṇu (*avatāra*) is brought out in the anthropomorphic images of Varāha. For explaining the concepts of *sṛṣṭi,* the sculptors depicted the figures of divinities associated with 'pure creation' such as Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and the *lokas* such *Bhū, Bhuvah, svah and Pātāla* on the vertebral column of Zoomorphic Varāha. (Ex. Baḍoh).

In the second aspect of Varāha, the various elements of the sacrifice or yajña are compared to the various limbs of the animal. For example three *iṣṭis* of *Jyotiṣṭoma Yajña* are compared to the neck of varāha which is represented in the Khajuraho Varāha. Similarly two other *iṣṭis* called *Prāyaṇīya* and *Udayanīya* are compared to the tusks of Varāha which are personified in human forms and are represented in the images of Varāha in the Madhya Pradesh. Again the two *dharmas*

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called *Iṣṭāpūrta* are compared to the ears of Varāha which are being shown in the human form in all the images of Varāha except Eran. The sun and moon are compared to his eyes, and the forehead of varāha to Brahmā (Brahma śīrṣa), which are beautifully represented in the image of Khajuraho. His tongue is compared to Agni "Agni Jihwā". A fine example of it is shown in the image of Yajña Varāha which is at present preserved in the Lucknow Musuem. His hair is compared to *darbha*. In this form, Varāha is addressed by the *Ṛṣis* as *vāk or* 'Speech' designated as Brahman, a form not to be captured even by the mind of others. (*Vāyu Purāṇa, adh.* 6, verses 1-11; *Kūrma Purāṇa,* Part I, *adh.* 6, verses 1-25) The earliest example of the representation of *Vāk* is realistically showed on the snout of Yajña Varāha at Eran. This is the only image of Yajña Varāha, where *Vāk* is shown with two hands keeping to her sides and standing. In the later images of Yajña Varāha, the same *Vāk* is shown in the form of four-armed Sarasvatī holding *veenā* in two hands and other two hands with *Varada* and *Kalaśa*. It clearly shows that the *Gnā* type goddesses *Vāk* and Sarasvatī of Vedic Period fused together and the individuality of Vāk is once for all lost in the goddess Sarasvatī in the later period.

For representing Varāha as 'Uplifter of goddess Earth' the anthropomorphic form was chosen with human body and boar face and this form was called as Bhū Varāha. In the zoomorphic form the figure of goddess Earth is shown in two posture - (1) hanging by holding the right tusk of Varāha (ex. Eran); (2) standing on the ground on the left side of the image of Varāha (ex. Khajuraho). In the anthropomorphic form of Varāha, Bhūdevī is shown mostly seated either on the left shoulder or left elbow of Varāha. In some cases, Bhūdevī is shown standing in the centre of the left palm or right palm or on the left knee of Varāha. In a single case the sculptors have depicted Bhū Varāha as touching the personal part of Bhūdevī to indicate the fertility aspect of Varāha. (Nachna).

In all the images of Yajña Varāha and Bhū Varāha the figure of Śeṣa is rarely missing. Śeṣa is always regarded as the bed of Lord Nārāyaṇa and during the intervals of two cosmic cycles, Lord Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) is said to be resting upon Ananta Śeṣa. It means that even if the creation disappears God remains unaltered and with him the only one of his creation, the only one without a second exists and that is Śeṣa. Ananta Śeṣa is said to be holding the whole universe on his numerous heads. According to the *Padma Purāṇa,* Śeṣa is said to be holding the fallen goddess Earth on his head when she fell from the head of demon Hiranyākṣa (ex. Majhouli).

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The sculptors of Madhya Pradesh realising the importance of Śeṣa represented him with both forms of Varāha. In the zoomorphic form of Varāha, Śeṣa is shown with the figure of Brahmā on the head of Varāha, on the tail of Varāha and between the legs of Varāha at the bottom. In the case of anthropomorphic form of Varāha, the figure of Śeṣa with Nāgi is shown sitting near the left foot of Varāha, who is then shown standing in *ālidhāsana* pose, by keeping his left leg on the hoods of Śeṣa.

Along with the figure of Śeṣa the figure of Garuḍa is shown in both forms of Varāha. It indicates its close intimacy with Viṣṇu who has got the epithet of 'Garuḍārūḍha Viṣṇu. Secondly, the depiction of Garuḍa explains the concept of sustanance on the earth. The figure of Garuḍa of Khoh and Majhouli supports the idea of sustanance.

The *Purāṇas* and the *Śilpaśāstras* describe Varāha as resting his right foot on Kūrma shell. According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the lower shell of Kūrma represents earth, the upper shell heaven and what is between the shell is the air - *prāṇa*. In Madhya Pradesh, while in the zoomorphic form, the image of Varāha is depicted as standing on the Kūrma shell, in the anthropomorphic form, Varāha is shown resting his right foot on its shell.

The zoomorphic images of Varāha found in the state are the excellent examples to represent the cosmogonical character of Varāha. They are depicted with many figures of divinities on the body related to the creation and yajña and are called Yajña Varāha.

ERAN:

The earliest and the biggest image of Yajña Varāha belonging to the late Gupta period was first located by A. Cunningham in 1874-76 in a village called Eran. This is situated at the entrance of Malwa region in Madhya Pradesh. The colossal image facing west, measures 13' 10" in length, 5' 1½" in breadth and 11' 10" in height (Plate 30). The inscription on the chest of Varāha informs us that the image was erected by Dhanya Viṣṇu, the younger brother of Mātṛ Viṣṇu and feudatory of the Hūṇa king Toramāṇa. It was consecrated on the 10th day of Phalguna of Toramāṇa's Regnal Year 1.

On the body of Varāha, 1185 figures of seers are depicted in eleven rows. They are two armed. They hold *kamaṇḍalu* of different shape in their left hands. The right hands of some of them are shown in *vismaya mudrā* and some others in *abhaya mudrā*. These sages according to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* are the denizens of *Tapaloka, Maharloka* and *Janaloka*. The texts says that when

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Brahmā was engaged in the process of creation, he found the earth sunk in the waters. So he took the form of a gaint Varāha and came down from the heaven to proceed to the nether region. At that time, while passing through the *Janaloka,* etc. because of his heavy hoofing and breathing, water started flowing downwards. The terrified sages like Sanatkumaras caught hold of the bristles of Varāha and prayed him for shelter. The same episode is depicated in the representation of Eran Varāha.

On the nose of Varāha the figure of two-armed goddess *Vāk,* who in the later images of Varāha has been shown in the form of Sarasvatī stands in *samabhaṅga* position. It is to be noted that this is the only figure of goddess Vāk or Sarasvatī shown in standing position.

The neck of Varāha is decorated with a wide bordered garland having twenty-eight circles in it. Among them, twenty seven circles have the symbolic fiugres of stars of Indian Zodiac and in one circle a crisp figure of a scorpion is shown (See Plate 30). According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* between the winter and spring when Surya is in the last part of *Kaṛttika nakṣatra,* i.e. in the house of *Meṣ a,* and Candra is in the first part of *Vaiśākha* i.e. in the *Vṛścika Rāśi,* during the combination of this auspicious hour even Devas are waiting to accept *dāna* from the human beings. The inscripion of Toramāṇa which is inscribed on the chest of Varāha informs us that Matṛ Viṣṇu and his brother belonged to Maitrāyaṇīya branch of Lunar race. Therefore, it is possible that to show the merit of *Vṛścika Rāsi,* the king and the sculptors must have thought of representing it in one of the circles of the garland. (See Plate 30).

On the head of Varāha, a mound like structure is shown it which four niches are occupied by the figures of Puruṣa in the west, Brahmā in the north, Viṣ ṇu in the east and Śiva in the south respectively. They are the representations of *vyūha* forms of 'Para' (means Supreme) prescribed in the Pāñcarātra system of Vaiṣ ṇavism. Accordingly, Puruṣa in the west niche represents Vāsudeva, Śiva in the south niche Saṁkaraṣaṇa, Brahmā in the north niche Pradyumna and Viṣṇu in the east niche is Aniruddha.

It is to be noted that the practice of exhibiting the figures of four *vyūhas* on the head of Varāha which started in the Gupta period countinued upto the period of Paramāras who ruled over Madhya Pradesh.

In front of the figure of Brahmā, the figure of seven hooded Śeṣa is shown to indicate that it is the Śeṣa who holds the universe created by Brahmā. The figure of Śeṣa is also depicted at the bottom in front of Varāha. With Śeṣa the figure of Kūrma also is there at the bottom. But both the figures are weather worn. At present only the tail of Nāga with Nāgi is seen between the legs of Varāha.

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The tusk of Varāha is held by the figure of Goddess Bhū. She is shown hanging and holding the tusk with her left hand. The depiction of goddess Bhū in this image reminds us of her condition when she was lifted by Varāha from the Nether region. (Line Drawing. 1)

Baḍoh

A fine specimen of the image of Varāha of the Pratihāra period datable to the 9th century A.D. was located by A. Cunningham in one of the shrines at Baḍoh. At present the image is preserved in the Gujarimahal Museum at Gwalior. It is 5' 5" long, 2' broad and 4'9" high. It is standing on a pedestal and is carved with 765 figures of different divinities and *ṛṣis* in 9 rows on all over the body. In this image, unlike the image of Eran the figures of ekādaśa Rudras, dvādaśa Suryas, *avatāras* of Viṣṇu, navagrahas, sages and others are depicted. It is very interesting to note that though the rows are not broad, the figures are very striking and cute. For example, in the depiction of *avatāras* of Visnu, the figure of Matsya is worth mentioning. On the bodv of it, the presonified figures of four Vedas are depicted (Figs. 31 and 32)

Among the rows, the top most is excellent. Actually this row is carved in the form of a panel. Through this depiction, the sculptors have very efficiently planned to bring out the quintessence of the creation of the universe. The panel is divided into two parts. The upper portion is carved exactly below the figure of Viṣ ṇu-Lakṣmī on the vertebral column. It consists of three circles carved one below the other. The lower portion of the panel is carved in semi-triangular form. The biggest circle represents *Bhūloka,* the middle circle which is smaller than the first for *Bhuvarloka* and the smallest circle represents *Svargaloka.* In the innermost portion of these circles, the respective deities of these lokas are depicted. Below the depiction of *Bhūloka,* in the triangular portion, the figures of thirteen hooded Nāga and Nāgi are shown seated one above the other. In order to indicate that these two figures are that of Śeṣanāga and Nāgi of *Pātālaloka,* the sculptors have marvellously shown the crisp shape of the face of a snake with two sharp eyes.

On the snout of Varāha, a small figure of Sarasvatī is shown seated on a pedestal in *lalitāsana* posture and playing *vīṇā.* On the nose, between the eyes, a striking figure of Gāyatrī is shown seated on a full blown lotus. Above her, three figures of Brahmā are seated on separate lotuses. The fourth figure is not seen. In front of him the seven hooded Śeṣa is shown. The tail of Nāga and the stems of the lotuses are joined and shown falling on the left front leg of Varāha which looks very natural. The ears of Varāha are compared with *Iṣṭapūrtadharma* and shown

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in the human form standing at the entrance of the ears. The eyes are compared with Sun and Moon and depicted in human forms above the eyes. The tusks are compared with *Prāyaṇīya* and *Udayanīya iṣṭis* and personsified figures are shown below the ears of Varāha.

The figure of goddess Bhū is shown holding the right tusk of Varāha. In front of Varāha the figures of Garuḍa and Nāga in human forms and the figure of Cāmaradhāriṇī are shown facing the deity. Garuḍa is sitting in kneel down position with the wings. The right wing is seen clearly and the left wing is broken. Nāga with folded hands is shown standing on the body of Kūrma. Cāmaradhāriṇī is standing with cāmara in her hand.

The pedestal is carved with the figures of Primordial Being Nārāyaṇa on the left, Devaki-Kṛṣṇa on the right and the Garuḍāruḍha Viṣṇu in the front to indicate that all the three are one. It is very clear that the sculptors of this period were very meticulous in bringing out the four essential aspects of the Supreme God. They are (1) creation (2) creator (3) creator of the creator and (4) the holder of the Universe. To exhibit the quintessence of creation of the Universe, the sculptors chose the long and wide vertebral column of Varāha. Then they placed Brahmā, the creator of the Universe on the head of Varāha which is called *Brahmaśīrṣa*. While representing the Creator of creator, the sculptors depicted Supreme Nārāyaṇa and his other forms such as Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa and made us realise that all the three are one the same. Lastly, they were fully aware of the fact that Śeṣa is the only one in the creation of Brahmā which bears the entire universe on his head. Therefore, they depicted it in the appropriate place on the head and on the vertebral column of Varāha. (Line Drawing 2).

Khajuraho:

A superb creation of Varāha of Candella art datable to early 10th century A.D. is installed in the cella of Varāha temple at Khajuraho. It is a mammoth piece with 689 figures of divinities and other celestial and terrestrial figures executed with great skill on the body (Fig.3) Among the images of Varaha, I have seen in other sites of Madhya Pradesh viz., Eran, Khoh, Badoh, Muradpur, Karitalai, Bihari, Jabalpur, Panagar, Majhouli, Khor, Mandsaur, Indore, Hinglajgarh, Bhopal, Ujjain and the present two sites in Uttar Pradesh viz., Dudhai and Chandpur, the image of Khajuraho Varāha stands out to be the most impressive image with full of iconographic significances.

On the snout of Varāha the striking figure of four-armed Sarasvatī is shown seated in *lalitāsana* posture on a lotus *pīṭha* and playing *vīṇā* with lower right and

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left hands. The upper right hand has *kamala* and the left hand is holding the *pustaka*. The face of Varāha is depicted with the personified figures of Surya and Candra on the eyes, *iṣṭapūrta dharmas* in the ears, *prayaṇīyā* and *udayanīya iṣṭis* on the tusks, and the figures of Brahmāṇī and Lakṣmī on the right and left side. Interestingly, the figure of Navagrahas are shown in a different manner. On the right side the figures of Surya, Candra, Mangala and Budha are shown seated. On the left side Guru, Śukra, Śani, one extra figure, Rahu and Ketu are shown seated. One does not know the reason for depicting one extra figure in the group. On the nose of Varāha between the eyes, a cute figure of two-armed Gāyatrī is shown seated in yogāsana posture on a *pīṭha*. She is decorated with *karaṇḍamukuṭa, karṇakuṇḍals, kaṇṭhahāra* and *hāra*. The neck of Varāha is decorated with a garland of the figures of thirty six devas. Between them, in the garland, three pairs of figures in the form of a serving spoon in leaf shape are depicted on the right, left and at the centre of the neck. They are the symbolic form of *Upāsadah,* i.e. three *iṣṭis,* preceding the pressing of Soma in a jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* compares the three *iṣṭis* of *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice to the neck of Varāha (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* III, 13, 37).

On the top of the head of Varāha, the figure of four-armed Brahmā with beard is shown seated in *yogāsana* posture on a full blown lotus *pīṭha*. In the upper right and left hands *śruk* and *śruva* respeectively are held. The lower right hand is in *abhaya mudrā* and the left hand is holding *kamaṇḍalu*. He is decorated with *jaṭamukuṭa, kaṇṭhahāra* and *upavīta*. At the bottom four figures of priests are shown seated in *ardhalalitāsana* on a lotus *pīṭha*. They are two-armed. The right hand is kept in in *abhaya mudrā* and the left hand holds water pot which seems to be covered with coconuts to indicate the auspicious occasion. They are the human personifications of the four Vedas. The *Bhāgavata Purana* while explaining the form of Primeval Boar (*kāraṇa Sūkara*) interprets the four Vedas as four priests (*Caturhotra*). Regarding the placement of Brahmā on the head of Varāha, the *Vāyu Purāṇa* and the *Matsya Purāṇa* describe the head of Varāha as *Brahmaśirṣa*. According to them, Brahmā is Vedic knowledge or the mind of the creator.

There are altogether eleven rows on the body of Varāha. The first row starts from the vertebral column of Varāha. It is designed very significantly in a panel form with a semi circular bottom and elongated sides. There are altogether 37 figures in the chamber. In this panel, the Khajuraho artist has attempted to portray the quintessence of the pure creation of the Supreme Being at the same time the artists have finely synchronized the emanations of *vyūha* with the trinity of Gods in the purāṇas. This panel has four sub-rows within itself which run one below the other. The first sub-row starts with five male figures. The four-armed figure in the

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centre is big. It is seated in *yogāsana* posture on a lotus *pīṭha*. It has *gadā* and *daṇḍa* in the upper right and left hands respectively. The lower right hand is in *abhayamudrā* and the left hand is holding *padma*. It is adorned with *kirīṭamukuṭa, kaṇṭhahāra, upavīta* and *kaustubha*. It is the representation of Para Vāsudeva "the Highest form of God". To his right and left four male figures, two on either side, are seated in *ardhalalitāsana* posture on lotus *pīthas*. They are two-armed. They are the four vyūhas of Supreme, i.e. Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. They are holding *daṇḍa* or *saṅkha* in their left hands and showing the right hands in abhaya mudrā. They are decorated with *mukuṭas, upavīta* and *kaṇṭhahāras*. They are seated at the same level with the figure of Para Vāsudeva on separate *pīthas* to indicate that they are the emanations of the Supreme Being.

Below in the second sub-row five figures are shown. The central figure with beard is big and four armed. He is seated in *yogāsana* posture on a full blown lotus *pīṭha*. He shows *abhayamudrā* in the right lower hand. In the left lower hand *kalaśa* is held. The upper right and left hands hold *śruva* and *veda* respectively. It is decorated with *jaṭāmukuṭa* and *upavīta*. It is the figure of Brahmā. To his right and left four male figures are seated, two on either side in *ardhalalitāsana* posture on separate *pīṭhas*. They are seated at a lower level from the main figure. Their hairs are tied and kept on the heads. All of them have water pot in the left hands and right hands are shown in *abhayamudrā*. They are identified with Svayambhuva, Prajapati, Usana and Bṛhaspati. They are four manifestations of Brahmā.

In the third sub-row altogether eleven figures are represented. The central figure seated on a lotus pitha is big and four-armed. It shows *abhayamudrā* and holds trident, snake and *kalaśa* in the other hands starting from the right lower hand in clockwise direction. It is decorated with *jaṭāmukuṭa, kaṇṭhahāra,* and *upavīta*. It is the representation of Śiva. To the right and left of Śiva, eight male figures are represented. Among them four on either side are seated in *ardhalalitāsana* posture on separate *pīṭhas*. They show *abhayamudrā* in the right hands and hold water pot in the left hands. They are decorated with *jaṭamukuṭa* and *kaṇṭhahāras*. They are identified with Rudra, Bhava, Sarva, Īśāna, Paśu, Bhīma, Ugra and Mahādeva, the manifestations of Śiva. The fifth figure on either side is shown standing in *dvibhanga* posture on a *pīṭha*. They are facing the deities in the centre in *añjalī mudrā*. They are standing outside the row within the panel. They have no clothes on the body except *kaupīna*. They have beards and long and heavy *jaṭ āmukuṭa* in the conical shape on their heads. They are identified with Caṇḍa and Pracaṇḍa of pure creation. Above their heads, two seated figures in *ardhalalitāsana* position are one depicted each on either side. They are also actually seated out side the row but within the panel facing south and north direction. They have water pot

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in the left hands and the right hands are shown in *abhaya mudrā*. They are identified with another class of inhabitants of the pure creation called *muktas* or liberated. They are described as intensely radiating spiritual atoms of the size of a trasarenu (mote in a sun beam).

In the fourth sub-row seven figures are represented. The central figure is a big and four-armed and seated in *yogāsana* posture on a lotus *pītha*. It shows *abhaya mudrā* and holds *gadā, cakra* and *saṅkha* in the four hands starting from the lower right hand in clockwise direction. It is adorned with *kirīṭamukuṭa, kaṇṭhahāra,* and *upavīta*. It is the representation of Viṣṇu. To his right and left, three male figures are seated in *ardhalalitāsana* on *pīṭhas*. All of them are adorned with *mukuṭas, upavītas,* and *kaṇṭhahāras*. They are identified with seven Viṣṇus. Below them seven figures of two-armed males are shown seated in a row. They have *abhayamudra* in the right hands and water pot in the left hands. All of them have long and conical shaped *jaṭas*. They are seven sages popularly called Saptaṛṣis belonging to the pure creation. They are shown facing the deities in the panel. Ending with this the, first row is consisted of thirty seven male figures. When we look at the row from the top, it looks like a circle because of its inner formation but in reality the figures are well placed one below the other in vertical shape. All the figures are shown facing the nose of Varāha except those of the Saptaṛṣis and four males two of whom are standing and other two are seated. The two seated figures are facing the north and south direction. This panel is so wide that it has enough room for the sub-rows within itself. (Line drawing 3).

The other rows in this image are occupied by the figures of Ekādaśa Rudras, Dvādaśa Surya, Aṣṭa Vasus, Saptamātṛkas, Gandharvas, Devas, sages and Nāgas. It is important to note that for the first time the figures of Kumāras such as Sanat, Sanandana, Sanaka and Sanatkumara are depicted on the body of Varāha. They are the four mental sons of the creator Brahmā. They are represented as young and handsome lads with good physique. The charm of the youth is realistically represented on their graceful faces with charming mouth and enchanting eyes. These four sages because of their tremendous penance attained the youthhood permanently. The figures of these young sages are shown standing on a lotus leaf. They are four-armed. The figure on the right front leg of Varāha is shown with two upper hands raised above its head and holding some object in the hands. The figure on the right back leg is shown with raised hands in *namaskāra mudra*. On the left side of Varāha, the upper hands of the other two figures of Kumāras are also shown in *añjalī mudrā*. The lower right hand of all the four figures are in *varadamudrā* and the left hands are kept on the side. They are decorated with studded *mukuṭas,*

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studded *kaṇṭhaharas, upavītas, keyuras, karṇakuṇḍalas, kaṭibandhas, hastavalayas* and *pādavalayas*.

On all the four legs of Varāha, there are figures of divinities and dikpalas. On the front right leg, the figures of Vāyu and Varuṇa are shown standing with their *vāhanas* and respective *āyudhas* in their hands. On the right back leg the figures of Kubera and Iśāna are represented in the similar fashion. On the left front leg, Yama and Nirrti are shown standing. They are shown with their respective *vāhanas* and holding *āyudhas* in their four hands. On the left hind leg the figures of Agni and Indra are shown with their *vāhanas* and with respective *āyudhas* in their hands. On all the four hoofs of Varāha, figures of *Samudraraja* are shown.

In front of Varāha, the figures of Kūrma, Śeṣa and Garuḍa in human form are represented. All of them are borken partially. A Cunningham has mentioned in his Report of 1864-65, Archaeological Survey of India, Vol.II, p.427, that he could see some trace of Bhūdevi's hand on the neck. At present, there is no trace of Bhūdevi's hand shown either on the neck or on the tusk of Varāha. But in front of the left leg of Varāha, a pair of Bhūdevis's feet being beautifully ornamented with *pādavalayas* is shown fixed on the ground. They are heavy and facing front. Every toe in the legs has a ring. The distance of height between the feet of Bhūdevi and tusk of Varāha is 3' 10 ½". The difference of the distance between them makes us infer that she might be standing independently holding the tusk of Varāha.

The image of Varāha in Khajuraho is an exuberant creation of the Candella period. In this figure the artists have successfully brought out three significant factors. The are:-

1. Representation of the quintessence of Higher or Pure creation.
2. Synchronization of the emanations of *Vyūha* theory of *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā* with the theory of Trinity of Gods of the Purāṇas.
3. Creation of Brahmā.

The first two factors in the order are very apporpriately represented on the vertebral column of Varāha. The third factor is brought out with the prolific representations of various creations of Brahmā on the body of the image of Varāha. They include Kumāras, eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas, Aṣṭa Vasus, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Bhairavas, Aṣṭadikpālas, Kinnaras, Saptamātṛkas, River Goddesses, Piṭrs, Nāgadevas and Ṛṣis. The beauty of his creation lies in the creation of Sanatkumāras. The Khajuraho artists had clear understanding about these Kumāras and meticulously portrayed them as young lads having no upper garment on the body and with innocent faces. In order to indicate that they were highly elevated

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sages and the oldest of all living beings, the artists have placed them on the lotus petal. The importance of Brahmā has been emphasised by portraying him on the top of the head of varāha. To make it even more meaningful, the sculptors have personified the four Vedas in human forms and shown them sitting at the feet of Brahmā. The placement of Brahma on the head of Varāha is very appropriate because the head of Varāha is *Brahmaśīrṣa.*

Dudhai:

Alexander Cunningham found four images of Varāha from Dudhāi which belonged to the Candellas. Among the four images of Varāha, two are still standing in the jungle at Dudhai. The third image is beautifully carved with figures on the body is at present preserved in the musuem at Lucknow. The realistic epithet of Yajña Varāha as having '*agni jihwā*' is depicted on the tongue of Varāha. It is very interesting to note that to the fourth one which was very small, he named it 'Baccā Varāha - Little Pig'. Two years ago, when I went to Dudhāi, I could not find the image. Next day I found it in the midst of marble stones stored in Dhora Railway Station. People told me that some miscreants tried to take away the Baccā Varāha out of Dudhāi. In the night, one of them got a message in the dream that if they carried the image out of Dudhāi, they would be ruined. Being afraid of fearful result, they silently brought back the image on the same night, and left it at Dhora Railway Station. At present the Baccā Varāha is happily standing there under the care of people day and night.

Majhouli:

In the Kalacuri period, the sculptors went a step ahead by synchronising the cosmological aspect of Brahmā Varāha with the *avatāra* aspect of Viṣṇu Varāha. A perfect example of this is found in the Varāha image, which is still being worshipped in the cella of Varāha temple located in. Majhouli (Jabalpur Dt.) There is no record regarding the history of the temple. Every year the villagers celebrate Varāha jayanti. In my view this is the only image of Varāha in the state which is in very good condition with all the accessories and is being worshipped in the cella regualrly. When we enter the cella, we find the deity standing very majestically on a pedestal. It is 6' 8" long, 7' 5' high and 3' 6' wide. The body of Varāha is neatly carved with forurteen rows of divinities. There are altogether 1090 figures on the body and legs. But they are so small and faded that it is difficult to identify them. On the whole, the figures on the body of Varāha are carved in such a manner that they look like a tight fitting garment on the body. The image of Varāha is accompanied by the figures of Bhūdevi, Garuḍa, Śeṣanāga and Nāgi in an unusual manner.

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Besides the Śesanāga, one more Nāga with human body is seen between the front legs. In front of it, the human figure of beautiful Nāgi is seated. Her (snake) tail is neartly curved and shown touching the tail of Varāha. So far we have not come across such depiction of Nāga and Nāgi facing each other in the images of Varāha.

In front of Varāha a thirteen hooded Śesanaga with a long tail is seen. The tail of Śesanaga formed in a coil appears to hold the Garuḍa on it. The figure of Garuḍa is seen with both hands broken from the shoulders. There is a *kalaśa* shown on the lap of Garuḍa who appears to be holding it near the chest. Above the central hoods of Śesanāga, there is a lotus pedestal on which a two-armed figure is seated in *yogāsana posture.* The hands of it are kept near the chest in *añjalī mudrā.* It is decorated with *karaṇḍamukuṭa,* and *keyūras.* The placement of this figure is very interesting. It is placed between the lower mouth of varāha and above the central hoods of Nāga. Above the head of this figure, there is a square shaped canopy which is supporting the lower mouth of Varāha.

Reagarding the identification of this figure, the local people call it Kṛṣṇa. According to them, Kṛṣṇa is seated on Kāliya. But actually it is the representation of Bhūdevi as described in the *Padma Purāṇa.* According to it, when Nārāyaṇa in the form of a Boar struck the demon Hiranayākṣa with one fang and killed him, he saw the earth falling from the demon's head. Varāha at once lifted it with his fang and put it on Śesa's head. The same is represented in this image. Apart from this figure of Bhūdevi, there is no other figure of her shown on the tusk.

Some more images of Varāha in Kalacuri period have come to light. But the image of Varāha at Majhouli is superb. It is a very unique creation of the early medieval period.

Paramāra sites:

During the Paramara period many images of Varāha have been sculptured. Some of them are kept in the museums at Ujjain, Indore and Bhopal. The image in the Navtoran temple at khor (Mandsore Dt.) and that in the Bhairav ghat in Ujjain are still there. All of them belong to the period between the 10th century A.D. and the 14th century A.D. In comparison to the Varāha images of the Guptas, Partihāras, Candellas and Kalacuris, the Paramāra images of Varāha are small in size. In spite of it, the sculptors of this period have very finely exhibited the essence of the concept of creation by the depiction of the figure of Matsya in the centre of the vertebral column. The figure of Matsya symbolises the synchronisation of cosmogonical aspect of Brahma-Varāha with the *avatāra* aspect of Viṣṇu-Varāha. Secondly, the depiction of the figures of four *vyūhas* on the vertebral column of

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the image of Varāha which started in the Gupta period continued in this period. They were called *Viṣṇucatuṣṭi* in Ujjain area.

The Paramāra sculptors went ahead in the depiction of *āyudhas* of Viṣṇu. For the first time in the Gupta period, the *āyudhas* of Viṣṇu were given the human forms and were shown with Viṣṇu. The same depiction was repeated for the first time with Varāha during this period. The Śaṅkhapuruṣa and Cakrapuruṣa holding their respective *ayudhas* in their hands are shown seated on either side of Varāha between the front and hind legs.

The most important feature of this period is that the atrists excelled in reproducting the concept of Supreme Soul and its creation. They took the concept of 'Cosmic Tree', the significance of which is explained in the *Bhagavad Gīta*. They represented it on the right and left side of the tail of Varāha. They portrayed the tree with roots up and branches at the bottom within a circle which is the symbolic form of infinity. Thus the 'concept of creation' originally visualised by the artists of the Gupta period in the context of the Vedic and Purāṇic literature reached its perfection in the period of Paramāras by adopting the philosophical theme explained in the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

The sculptors of Madhya Pradesh very realistically brought out the *avatāra* aspect of Viṣṇu Varāha in the sculptural form. Due to space constraints, I am not able to bring this out in this article, but I have dealt with it in my book.

In a nutshell, the sculptors of Madhya Pradesh have successfully conveyed two messages to the viewers through the images of Varaha. In the first place the huge images of varaha in both forms bursting in strength of virility are symbolic of the expression of might and power of royalty, starting with the personae who had saved the country from the hands of foreign invaders just like the deity rescued the goddess from the Nether region from the demon Hiranyākṣa. Secondly, they exhibited the concept of creation and *Yajña* on the body of zoomorphic form of Varāha, and the concept of *avatāra* in the anthropomorphic form of Varāha. The exuberant representations of both forms make us conclude that the artists of the State must have well versed in the Vedic literature, *Pāñcarātra* texts, Purāṇas and Śilpa Śāstras. They have the skill to utilise art as a medium of communicating religious tenets as well political ideas. In fact, according to Dr. B.N. Mukherjee, "in these sculptors we may see how religious and cosmogonical concept is grafted on poetical thought and action".

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References

1. मल्वं बिभ्रतीगुरुभृद् भद्रपापस्य निधनं तितिक्षुः।
वराहेण पृथ्वी संविदाना सूकराय विजिहीते मृगाय॥

Atharva Veda, XII, 1 48 (tr. Eng) by Whitney,

Atharva Veda.

2. *Taittirīya Saṁhitā,* 7, 1, 5.

3. सलिलमेव सप्रजापतिर्वराहो भूत्वोपन्यामज्जत् तस्य
यावन्मुखमासीत्तावतीं मृदमुदहरत् सेयम् अभवत्

Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Saṁhitā, 6, 7.

4. Maheshwari Prasad, *Some Aspects of the Varāha Kathā in Epics and Purāṇas,* p.6.

5. Julious Eggling (tr. Eng) *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Book* XIV, 1, 2, 11. p.451.

6. *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* Ch. 47 *śl.* 1-13.

7. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* Part I, Ch.4.

8. *Matsya Purāṇa,* Ch. 248 *śl.* 62-79.

9. *Vāyu Purāṇa, adh.* 6, Verses 1-11.

10. *Kūrma Purāṇa,* Part I, *adh.* 6, Verses 1-25.

11. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa,* Part I, Ch.5, Verses 1-11.

12. V.S. Agrawala, *Solar Symbolism of the Boar,* Yajña Varāha - an interpretation, 9.15.

13. *Linga Purāṇa,* Part I, *adh.* 94, (Uplifting the EARTH) pp.4 ff.

14. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Sk.*III, *adh.*13. Verses 13-30. also see *sk.*III, *adh.* 13, Verses 31.

15. *Padma Purāṇa,* Uttarakhaṇḍa, *adh.* 237, Verses 10-29.

16. *Aparājitapṛcchā* of Bhuvanadeva, *adh.*25, *śl.* 1-17, pp. 58 ff.

17. *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi,* III, 1, 738-741

18. *Caturvargacintāmaṇi,* Dāna Khaṇḍa, 327-328.

19. *Rūpamaṇḍana,* III, 24

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20. *Devatamūrtiprakaraṇa,* V, 72-76.

21. *Śilparatna,* 25, 112-116.

22. *Śilparatnākara,* XI, *śl.* 14.

23. *Mānasollāsa,* Part I, *śl.* 699-702.

24. *Matsya Purāṇa,* 260, 28-30.

25. *Agni Purāṇa,* 49, 2-3.

26. *Viṣṇudharmotara Purāṇa,* III, 79, 1-11.

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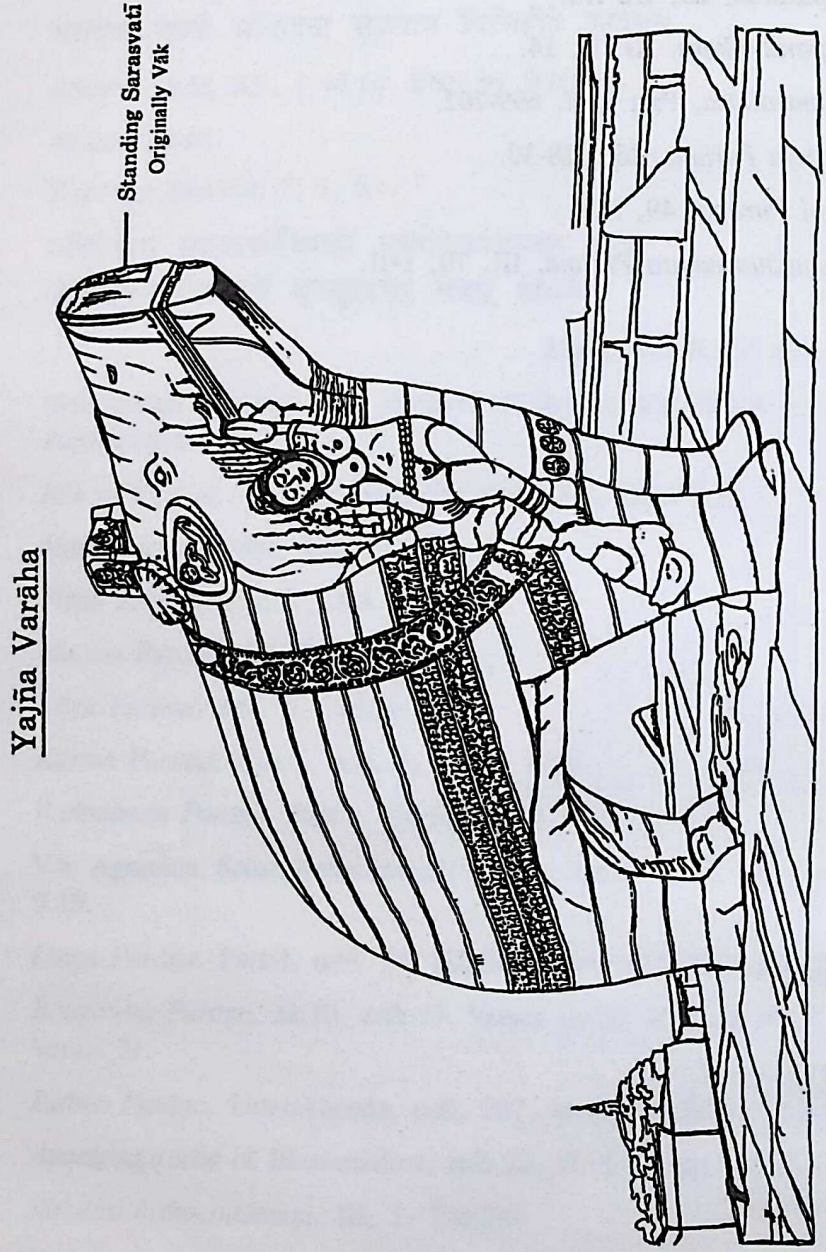

Line drawing 1: Yajñ Varāha, Eran, showing scorpion.

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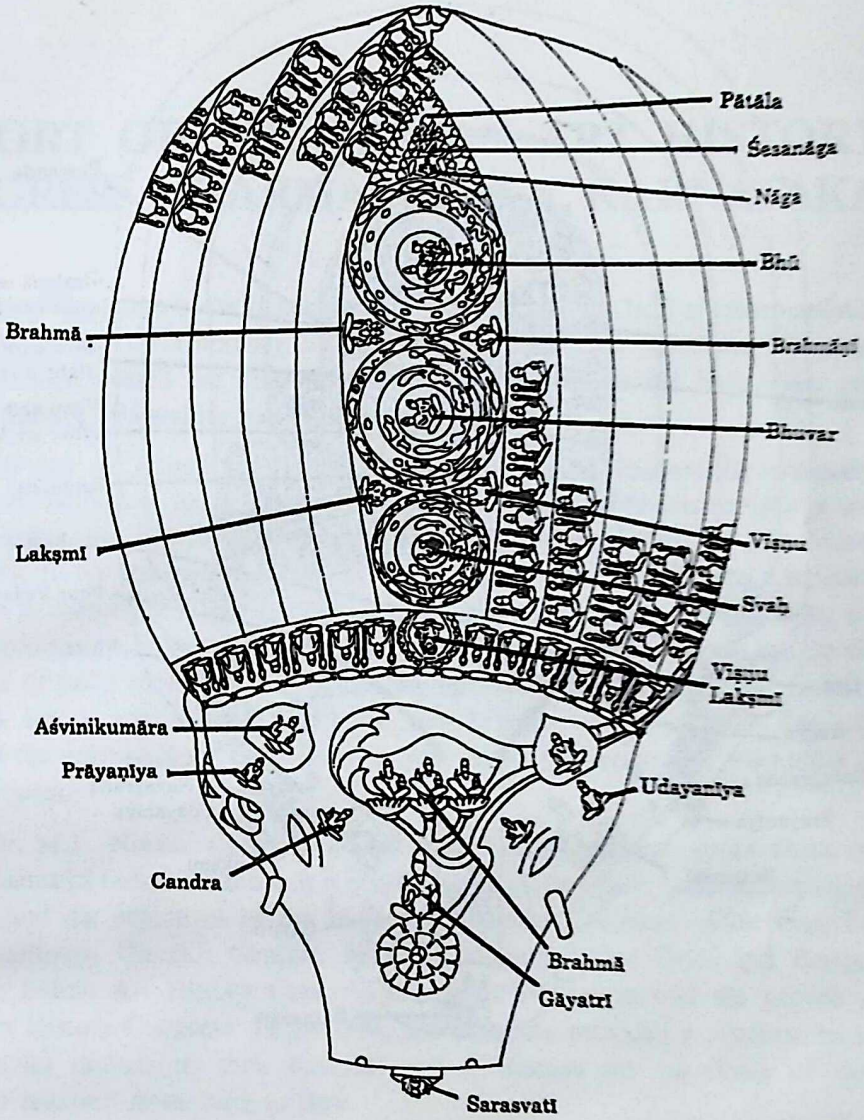

Line drawing 2 : Yajña Varāha, Badoh, schematic diagram of vertebral column

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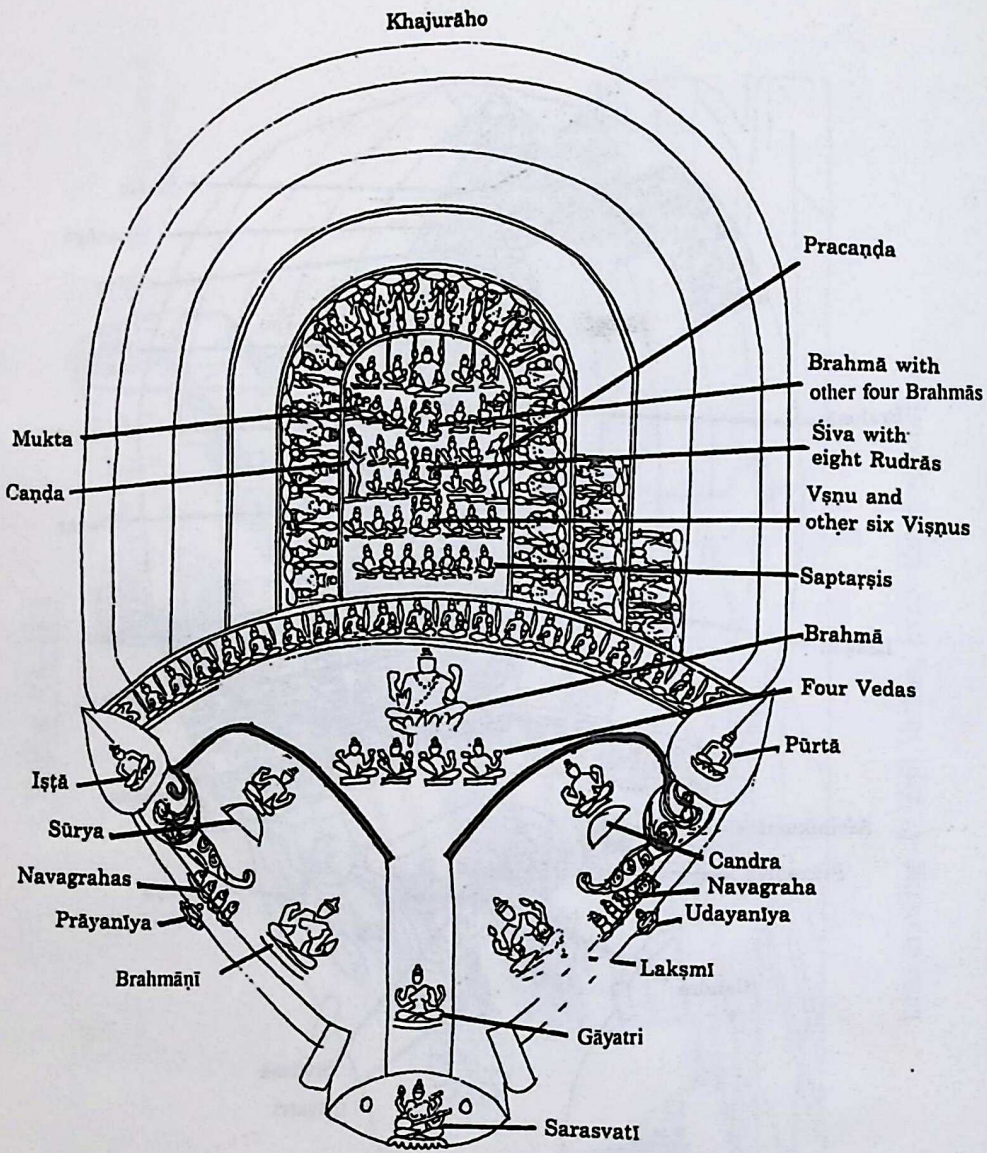

Line drawing 3 : Yajña Varāha, Khajuraho, schematic diagram of vertebral column

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REPORT OF THE INDIAN ART HISTORY CONGRESS, DHARMASTHALA, KARNATAKA

The 8th session of the Indian Art History Congress was held at Dharmasthala, from 17th to 19th of November 2000. Padma Bhushana Sri Veerendra Heggade, Dharmadhikari, hosted the session and International Centre for Indian Art and Cultural Studies; Bangalore has co-sponsored the session.

Sri Anantha Kumar, the Hon'ble Minister of Culture, who was the innagurate the session, could not reach Dharmasthala due to unavoidable circumstances and in his absence. Sri Veerendra Heggade inaugurated the session at Vasanth Mahal auditorium. In his inaugural address, he urged the government to set up a separate task force to curb the smuggling of precious artifacts from India. He called for the active participation of the young art historians in the field of research and in the protection of great monuments of India. He stressted upon the need for creating awareness among the students about the rich heritage of our country. He also explained the efforts of the Dharmothana trust in the protection and renovation of historical sites.

Dr. M.L. Nigam, Chairman Indian Art History Congress, spoke about the basic elements of Indian culture that is prajñā, sādhanā, and kalā. Later he explained the aims and the objectives of the Indian Art History Congress. After that, Dr. R.D. Choudhury, Director General, National Museum, New Delhi and General Secretary, Indian Art History Congress explained the origin and the growth of Indian Art History Congress. In his view, the Congress provides a platform to art historians for exchanging their thoughts and to discuss the out come of their respective research from time to time.

Dr. S.P.Gupta, Chairman, Indian Archaeological Society and Indian History and Cultural Society, Delhi delivered the Presidential Address. He highlighted the need of the study of Indian Art History. Dr. Gupta did not deliver his speech like other presidents. He broke the convention and delivered his speech with the help of slides, just like lectures. So, it became very interesting. He elaborated in his

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address, as art is the media created by the people. The culture is reflected through this media. In the changing cultural scenario, Indian art and culture has a great place of significance. The attitude of comparing Indian culture with western only to look down upon is slowly transforming into looking at the Indian culture with a special approach. Several indologists, art historians, and archaeologists are responsible for the transformation of this attitude. Thus Indian art has to be looked upon holistically.

On the same occasion, KALA, the annual journal of the Indian Art History Congress was released by Sri Veerendra Heggade. One of the editors of KALA, Dr. Maruti Nandan Tiwari gave the full information the about journal and summed up the contents of it.

The welcome address was given by Prof S. Prabhakar, Secretary, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunathesvara Education Society and the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal, Prof and Head of CIAS, Bangalore, Secretary, International Centre for Indian Art and Cultural Studies Bangalore and the Joint-secretary, Indian Art History Congress.

The theme of the academic session was "Saivism in Art and Culture." The venue of the conference was most befitting since it was held in the abode of Dharma under the blessings of Lord Manjunathasvamy. The five different academic sessions were well organised with the papers presented by scholars coming from different parts of the country. Session I, on Saiva Religion and Philosophy, was presided over by Dr. M.L. Nigam. Four papers were presented and interesting discussions followed Dr. Krishna Shastry presided over the session II on Agamas and Rituals Four papers enlighting the concepts and the unusuals rituals were discussed. Session III was on Saiva Art in global concept, presided over by Dr. N.P. Joshi. Dr. Tara Kashyap brought very interesting aspect of architecture and sculpture in the Siva temple at Prambanan. The session IV was on Temple architecture and it was presided over by Dr. Marutinandan Tiwari. Reputed sacholars presented six papers in this session. The session V was on sculpture and iconography, presided over by Dr. Haripriya Rangarajan. About ten papers were presented drawing the attention of te fellow scholars on rare iconography of Siva.

A special session was arranged to focus the study on Jainism in Art and Literature of Karnataka. Dr. H.P. Nagarajayya spoke on Jaina philosophy and literature, Dr. Maruti Nandan Tiwari presented a paper on Bahubali images of Karnataka and Dr. S.R. Rao spoke on lesser-known Jaina monuments.

Another special session highlighted the coastal culture of Karnataka, which is unique in respect of rituals, performance, and antiquity. It was presided over by

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Dr. K.S. Haridas Bhat. Dr. Prabhakar Joshi spoke on the special dance-drama form of coastal Karnataka, Yakshagana. Dr. Chinnappa Gowda spoke on Bhutaradhana, a socio-religious and ritualistic tradition of coastal region. Dr. H.V. Rajgopal focussed on Nagamandala, the unique coastal cult tradition. And finally the session was concluded with a paper on Rituals of Manjunatha Swamy temple.

The reputed art historian Dr. Haripriya Rangarajan delivered Dr. K.D.Bajpai Memorial Lecture on 'Varaha Images in Madhya Pradesh - an Iconographic study.

The Reception Committee headed by Dharmadhikari Sri Veerendra Heggade felicitated three great scholars of the country namely, Dr. S.P. Gupta, Dr. S.R. Rao and Dr. K.S. Haridas Bhat in the valedictory function. The delegates were bestowed with the blessings of Lord Manjunatha and they carried home the cherishing memories of the taste of the special coastal food. The scholars and delegates bid farewell to Dharmasthala with a strong wish to visit the place once again.

Dr. R.D. Choudhury, General, Secretary, IAHC, who is also the Director General of the National Museum had to leave Dharmasthala in the evening of the inaugural day for Delhi to attend an urgent meeting, against his desire, giving the responsibility to me the Joint Secretary, Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal to verse the various functions of the session, which was done by me to the satisfaction of all.

By **Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal**

Joint-Secretary,

Indian Art History Congress.

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REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

At the very out set, I welcome you all for the august session of the IAHC held at Dharmasthala, on 17th-19th Nov. 99.

I like to say the brief history of the IAHC, how it was formed for the art lovers of India.

The necessity of forming a broad based association of art historians to study the variegated Indian art forms has long been felt. On the 21st April, 1992, an association called Indian Art History Congress has dully been set up with its headquarters at Guwahati (Assam). This Congress has been formed on the auspicious occasion of the Annual Day celebration of the Assam State Museum, Guwahati.

The chief aim of the IAHC is to study and publicise various fine arts including architecture, sculptures, paintings, performing arts and folk arts, to preserve, promote and propagate Indian classical art and popular arts and crafts and to provide a common platform to young and upcoming Indian art historians to exchange ideas, to discuss their researches and other professional matters.

Thus the IAHC came into existence on 21st April, 1992, with Prof. K.D.Bajpai as its Chairman and Dr. R.D. Choudhury as its General Secretary. This was formally declared on 21st April, 1992, the date which was to mark the foundation day of the Assam State Museum under the Directorate of Museums, Assam.

The first session of the IAHC was held at Dharwad University with the active help and cooperation of Dr. S.P. Gupta, New Delhi and Dr. A.Sundara, Professor, Department of A.I.H.C. and Epigraphy, Dharwad, jointly with the Annual session of the Indian Archaeological Society, Indian Prehistory & Quarternary Society and Indian History & Cultural Society from 6th-8th Nov. 92. The eminent art historians of the country including Vice-Chancellors like Prof. Nautiyal of Avadh University attended the first session. Prof. V.S.Pathak was elected the General President of the session, who presided over it.

The General body of the IAHC at Dharwad, elected the Executive Body. Dr. M.L. Nigam, Former Director of Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad, was elected President of the Congress after the demise of the founder Chairman, Prof. K.D. Bajpai,

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for a period of three years. Dr. R.D. Choudhury, Director of Museums, Assam, was elected the General Secretary. The Executive Committee consist of total seventeen members, drawn from different parts of the country.

The second session was held at Lucknow State Museum at the invitation of Dr. S.D. Trivedi, Director of State Museum, Lucknow, along with the golden jubilee of the Museum Association of India. Dr. M.L. Nigam, Chairman attended the session, but because of the sudden death of his younger brother he had to leave Lucknow. In his absence, Dr. Anand Krishna of Varanasi presided over the seminar. Dr. R.A.Avasthi delivered the Prof. K.D.Bajpai memorial lecture which was introduced for the first time in this session.

The third session of IAHC was held at Thanjavur at the invitation of Dr. Raju Kalidos. Head of the Depatt. of Sculpture, Tamil University. The seminar was held on the topic, "New Sculptural Discovery in India". Dr. V.Balambal delivered Prof. K.D.Bajpai memorial lecture.

The fourth session was held at Patna on 15th-17th Feb. 96, under the auspices of K.P.Jayaswal Research Institute, Dr. C.P. Sinha, Director of the Institute, hosted the session with great success. Two seminars on the topic (a) The Buddhist art of India and (b) Indian Terracotta Art through the ages were held at Patna session.

The General President for the session was Prof. (Dr.) N.P. Joshi, an eminent art historian of the country, Prof. (Dr.) B.P. Sinha, eminent archaeologist and art historian of the country, delivered Prof. K.D.Bajpai memorial lecture.

The fifth session was held at Bhubaneswar on invitation of Dr. H.C.Das, under the auspices of Advanced Centre for Indological Studies, Bhubaneswar. The topic of the seminar was on "Art and Architecture including paintings and Iconography in India in Ancient and mediaeval periods."

Dr. Anand Krishna, Varanasi, eminent art historian of the country, was the General President of the seminar Dr. Biswanarayan Shastri, an eminent indologist and president of the Kamarupa Anusandhana Samiti (Assam Research Society) delivered Prof. K.D.Bajpai memorial lecture.

The sixth session was held at Shillong on invitation of Dr. Julius L.R.Marak, Curator, Meghalaya State Museum, Shillong, from 6th to 8th Nov. 97. The Directorate of Art and Culture, Govt. of Meghalaya, hosted the session with great success. The Congress was inaugurated by His Excellancy, the Governor of Meghalaya, Mr. M.M. Jacob, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Mr. S.C.Marak, as Chief Guest Hon'ble Minister of Art and Culture Mr. F.W.Momin presided over the opening session. Dr. M.N.Deshpande, Former Director General, Archaeological Survey of Inida was the General President presided over the session. The seminar on the topic "Decorative Arts of India" was held, Dr. Hemlet Bareh Nagaphynta delivered Prof. K.D.Bajpai Memorial lecture.

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The seventh session was held at Kanyakumari under the auspices of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari on 5th-7th Nov. 98. Dr. R.Nagaswami, Madras, an eminent scholar, delivered Prof. K.D. Bajpai Memorial Lecture.

Dr. S.R.Rao, Bangalore, an eminent archaelogist Art historian was the General President of the session.

Shri P.Parameswaram, President and Shri A.Balakrishnan General Secretary of Vivekananda Kendra, hosted the session at Kanyakumari with success.

This eighth (present) session is going to be held at Dharmasthala from 17th to 19th Nov. 99 at the invitation of Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal in the Kanyakumari session.

Dr. S.P. Gupta, the eminent Indologist of our country from Delhi, will preside over the session as General President of the Congress. Dr. Haripriya Rangrajan, Lady Governor of Andhra Pradesh will deliver the K.D.Bajpai memorial lecture. The theme of the seminar is "Saivism in Art and Culture."

In this august occasion, the 5th volume of `Kala', the journal of the IAHC and Proceedings of the 7th Kanyakumari session will be released. The total number of members is 177 of which 144 are life members. I hope this session will come with success with the help and cooperation of the members of the IAHC and Dharmadhikari Dr. Veerendra Heggade Dharmasthala.

With Namaskar.

R.D. CHOUDHURY

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Plate 1. Dubarani stone slab inscription, Barpathar, Assam.

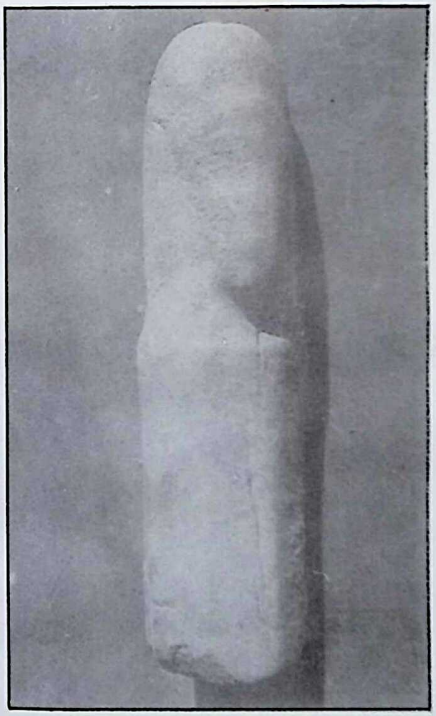

Plate 2. Mukha-linga, Dubarani, Assam.

Plate 3 Harihara, Dayani, Assam

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Plate 4 Harihara, Borpathar, Assam.

Plate 5 Harihara, Rajapukhari Sarupathar, Assam.

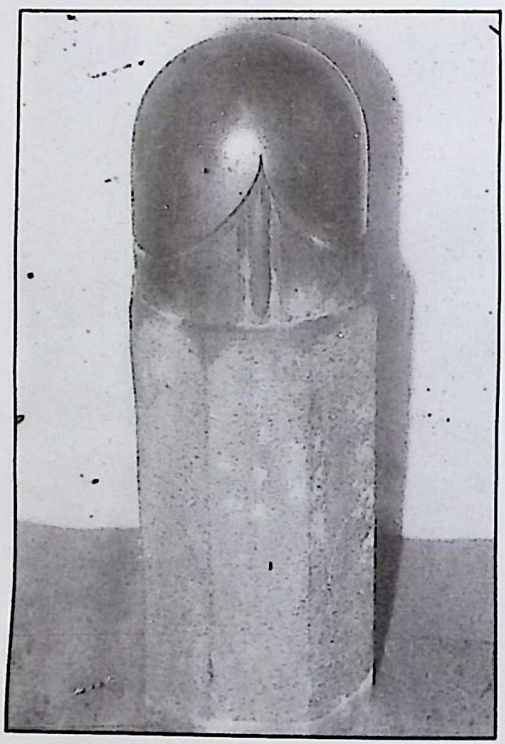

Plate 6 Siva-linga, Borpathar, Assam.

Plate 7 Nataraja - Ambari Excavation, Assam, 13th-14th Cent. A.D.

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Plate 8 Nataraja - Gauhati, Assam, 10th-11th Cent. A.D.

Plate 9 Nataraja - Madan-Kamdev, Gauhati, 11th-12th Cent. A.D.

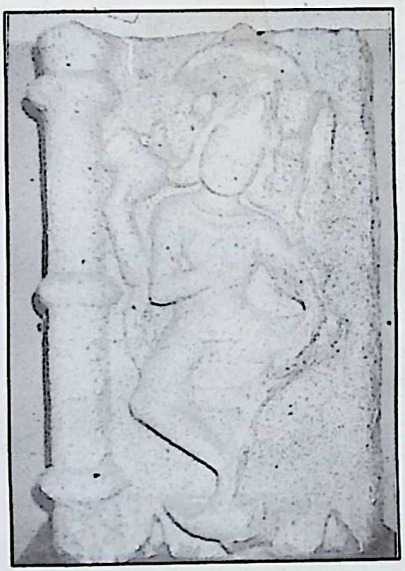

Plate 10 Nataraja - Madan-Kamdev, Gauhati, 11th-12th Cent. A.D.

Plate 11 Indra as Gala devata, Thiruvaliswaram, Tamilnadu.

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Plate 12 Indra over the western toran, Tiruvallam, Tamilnadu.

Plate 13 Dancing Siva with agni on his right hand. Siyamangalam, Tamilnadu.

Plate 14 Nataraj Bronze, Kuran.

Plate 15 Nataraj Bronze, Nellur.

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Plate 16 Ardhanarisvara, Yellesvaram, Early Chalukyan, 6th Cent. A.D.

Plate 17 Ardhanarisvara, Somesvara temple, Mukhalingam, Eastern Ganga Art. 9th Cent. A.D.

Plate 18 Ardhanarisvara, Paccala Samesvara temple, Panagel western Chalukya.

Plate 19 Ardhanarisvara, Manumasiddhesvara temple, Krishnapatanam, Telgu-Cola Art, 13th Cent. A.D.

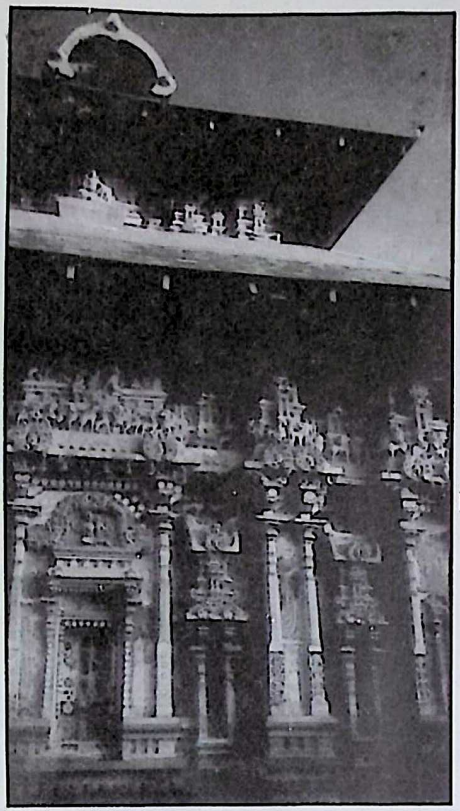

Plate 20 Sculpture of Sverammu temple inside Vatakkunathan temple, Trissur.

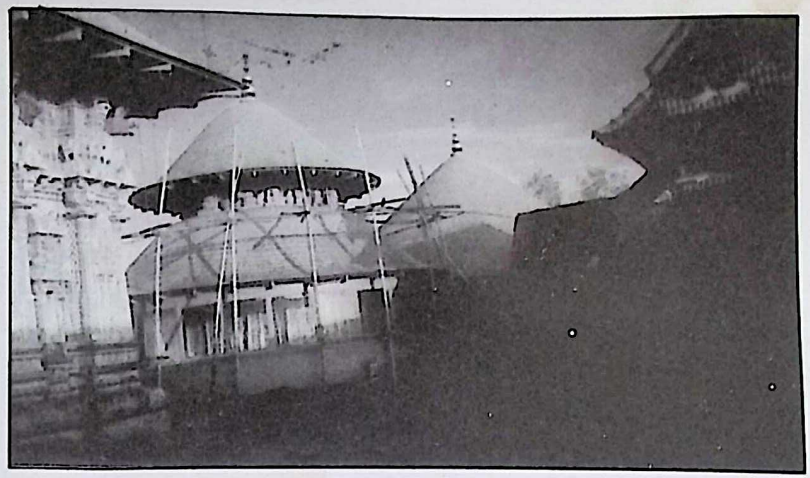

Plate 21 Inside view of the Vatakkunathan temple, Trissur of Northern most side.

Plate 22 Eastern side view of Vatakkunathan temple, Trissur.

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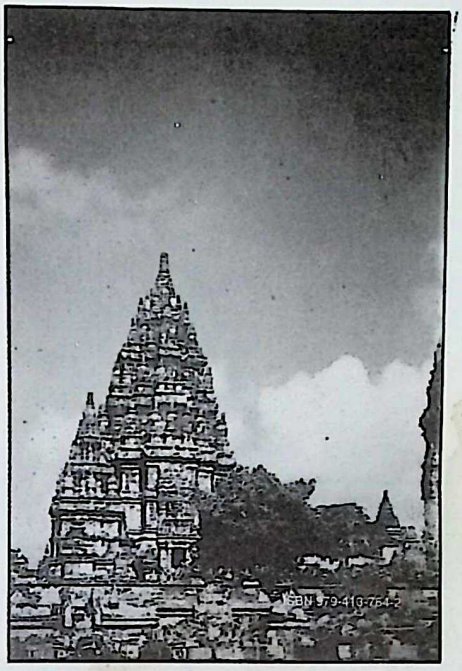

Plate 23 Prambanan Siva Temple.

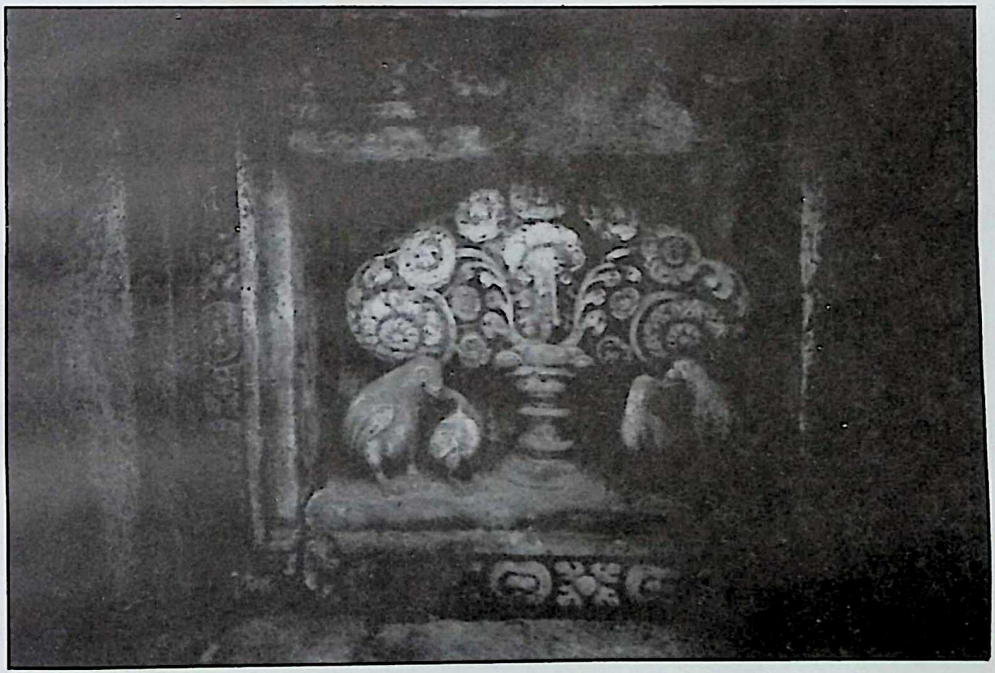

Plate 24 Prambanan Kalpavrikṣa with bird on either side.

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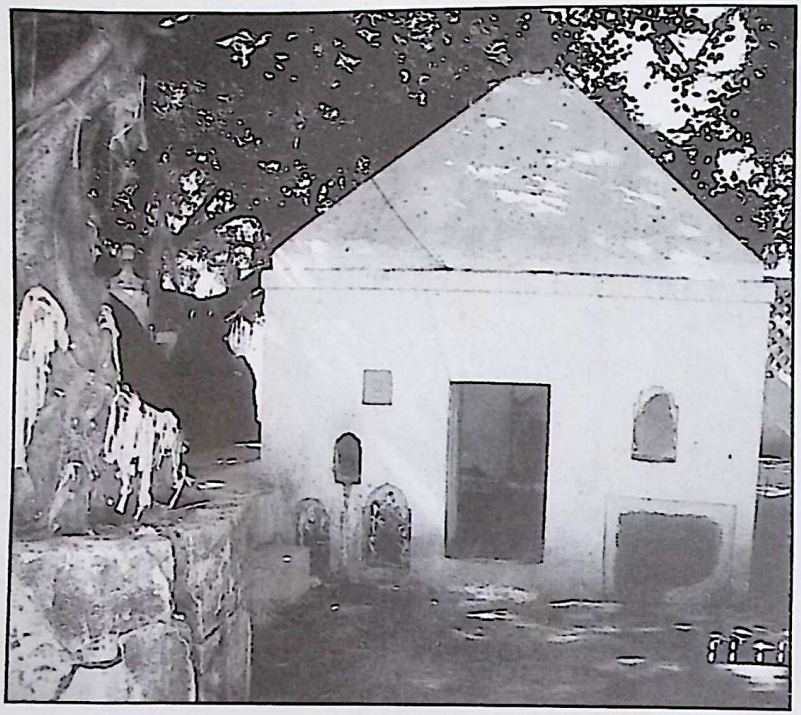

Plate 25a Temple at Aksayabata.

Plate 25b Sculptures at Aksayabata.

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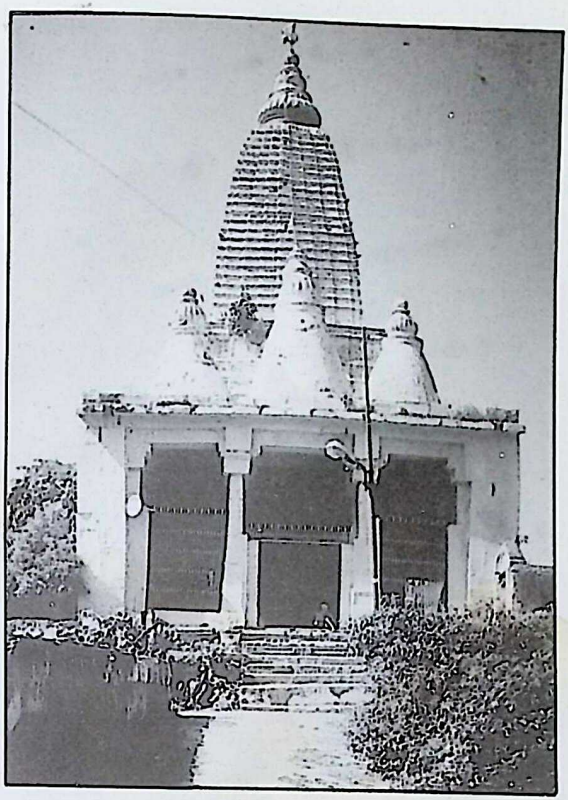

Plate 25c Temple of Prapitamahesvara.

Plate 25d Prapitamahesvara Siva.

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Plate 26a Temple of Markandeyesvara.

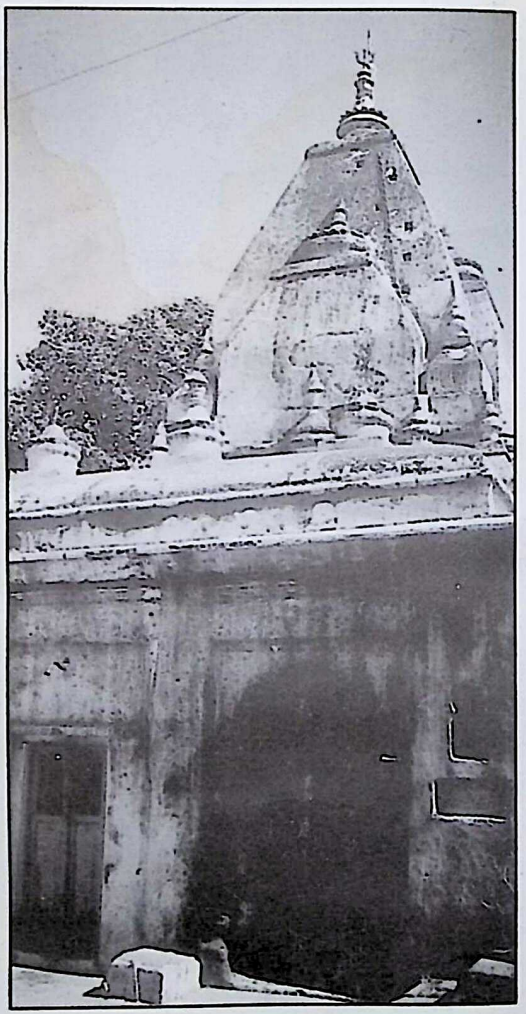

Plate 26b Temple of Griddhesvara.

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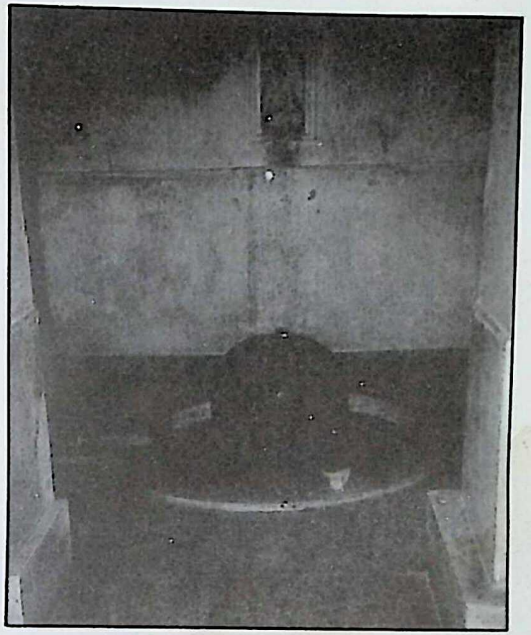

Plate 26c Linga of Griddhesvara Siva.

Plate 26d Western Door-Jambs of Bhairava Sthana Temple.

Plate 26e Eastern Door-Jambs of Bhairava Sthana Temple.

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Plate 27 Virabhadraswami Temple, Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh.

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Plate 28 Sambasia.

Plate 29 Sambasia.

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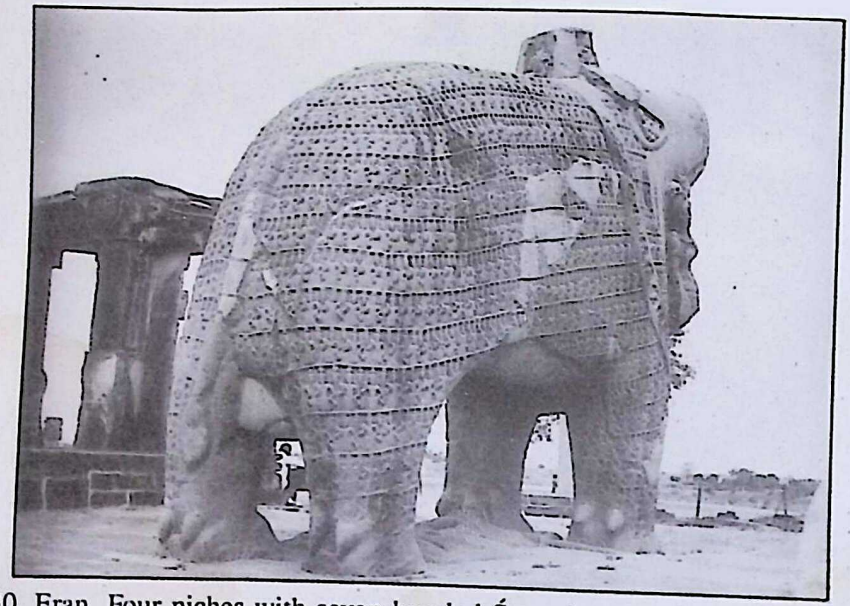

Plate 30 Eran, Four niches with seven-hooded Śesa shown opposite to north niche on the head.

Plate 31 Figure of Bhuloka, Bhuvarloka and Svargaloka.

Plate 32 Yajña - Varāha.

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INDIAN ART HISTORY CONGRESS
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